

VOL. XXII
NO. 9
SEPTEMBER
1960

THE DIVINE LIFE

SWAMI SIVANANDA'S
74th BIRTHDAY
SOUVENIR
ISSUE



BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AT SIVANANDANAGAR

The construction of residential and office buildings at Sivanandanagar is largely undertaken through the help of munificent devotees, enabling us to provide accommodation to the steadily-increasing number of spiritual aspirants from within this country and abroad, visitors from different places, as well as departmental quarters for the growing activities of the Ashram. It is only through the help of such devotees we were able to build the Eye Hospital and two indoor-wards for the patients. There is a long-standing need for the reconstruction and enlargement of the main office premises, where visitors also have *darshan* of Swamiji.

We request generous devotees to help us implement the above scheme. They are also welcome to build rooms in their names, or in memory of their relatives, which will be useful to them when they visit the Ashram or if they wish to stay on here for a length of time, and which will otherwise provide accommodation to spiritual aspirants and thus serve as their personal contribution to the Divine Life Trust. Construction charges of a medium-size room are Rs. 2,500. All particulars from:

Secretary, Divine Life Society, P.O. Sivanandanagar, via Rishikesh, U.P.

RELIGIOUS CALENDAR

(Sivanandanagar)

SEPTEMBER

- 20 Mahalaya Amavasya
- 21 Navaratri Puja Arambha
- 27 Saraswati Avahana
- 29 Navaratri Puja Samapti
- 30 Vijaya Dashami

OCTOBER

- 1 Ekadasi
- 2 Pradosha Puja
- 4 Purnima
- 16 Ekadasi
- 17 Pradosha Puja
- 19/20 Amavasya;
Dipavali;
Lakshmi Puja
- 25/26 Skanda Shashthi
- 29 Yajnavalkya Jayanti
- 30 Ekadasi
- 31 Chaturmasya Samapti

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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3

1st Sept 1960

Sri Rani Chandravati Singi
Raj Kothi, Gaya.

God is not distant from you.
He is with you, within you,
everywhere around you. When
you take one step towards
Him, He runs ten steps towards
you. He is easily attained by
that devotee who surrenders
himself to Him, who constantly
remembers Him. God Himself
looks after his material and
spiritual welfare.
May God bless you! Sivananda

THE DIVINE LIFE

CONTENTS

*Birthday Souvenir Issue, September 1960, Vol. XXII, No. 9,
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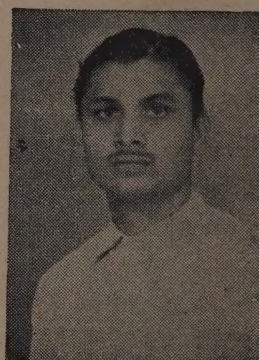
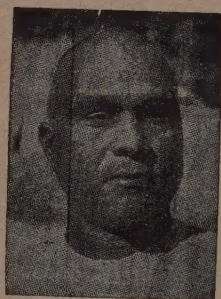
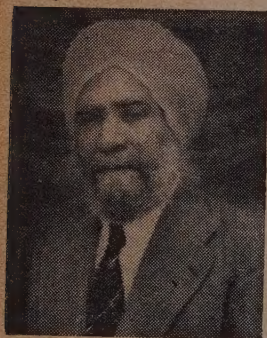
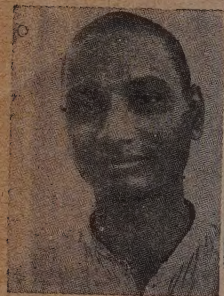
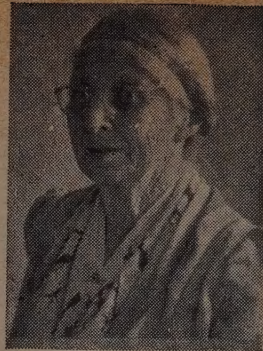
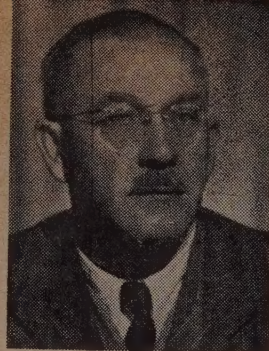
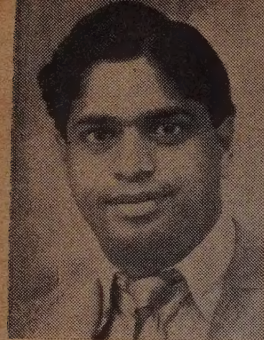
	<i>Pages</i>
1. Salutations to the Guru —Swami Krishnananda	.. 211
2. Conquer Materialism Through Spirituality —Swami Sivananda	.. 212
3. Messages and Greetings: By Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Hon. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Hon. Gulzarilal Nanda, Dr. B. Gopala Reddy, Hon. Surjit Singh Majithia, Hon. S.V. Krishnamoorthy	.. 213
4. Sivananda's Influence on Our Lives —Swami Santoshananda	.. 215
5. Standard-Bearer of India's Ancient Wisdom —Balwant Singh Puri	.. 216
6. Sivananda and Ramana Maharshi —P.C. Divanji	.. 218
7. Saviour of Our Times —E.D. Mudd	.. 220
8. Gurudev and His Life-Transforming Teachings —Erik Schmickl	.. 221
9. Omnipresent, Benevolent Guru —Sivananda-Lalita	.. 224
10. Life, Its Significance —Swami Sivananda	.. 225
11. Saint and His Institution —Lie Tjong Tiau	.. 226
12. Individual Attention and Guidance —Sivananda-Lori Goehl	.. 226
13. Divine Life Society and Its Illustrious Founder —Swami Paramananda	.. 227
14. Sivananda Has Answered My Prayers —Sivananda-Candida	.. 231
15. Dissemination of Knowledge, the Best Homage —Dr. Chou Hsiang-Kuang	.. 232
16. One Who Has Transformed My Life —Dori Haab	.. 233
17. Religion for Man's Discovering Himself —Swami Sivananda	.. 234
18. Calm at the Centre of the Whirlwind —Florence Barker	.. 235
19. Spiritual Fighter for Freedom and Peace —Heinz Wyhr	.. 235
20. Memorable Visit to Sivananda's Ashram —N. Balasubramaniam	.. 236
21. Impressions of My Brief Stay at Rishikesh —G.V. Naidoo	.. 238
22. Ideal of the Guru as Found in Sivananda —N. Srinivasa Rao	.. 239
23. Some Fundamentals of Sadhana —Swami Sivananda	.. 242

	<i>Pages</i>
24. Fruitful Renewal of a Forgotten Contact	
—Shanti Bai	.. 245
25. Literary Contributions to Enlightenment and Progress	
—Myles M.R. Jones	.. 246
26. Dynamic Instrument of the Divine	
—K. Subramaniam	.. 247
27. Message That Heals the Body, Mind and Soul	
—Eddie Boon	.. 249
28. Belief and Deed	
—Swami Vedantananda	.. 250
29. One Caste of Humanity	
—Myriam Orr	.. 252
30. Spirit of Duty	
—Swami Sivananda	.. 253
31. Compassionate Guide to Life Eternal	
—Otti Friedman	.. 254
32. Sivananda and His Literature	
—Chandulal B. Patel	.. 255
33. Magnanimous Service in Fostering Unity	
—George Veaurdy	.. 259
34. Let Us Be Worthy of Our Guru	
—Swami Omkarananda	.. 260
35. Blessing That is in Contact with Gurudev	
—Denise Horn	.. 261
36. Guru Guides the Disciples	
—Letters of Swami Sivananda	.. 262
37. How Swamiji Has Been Guiding Me	
—Susano Ortiz	.. 270
38. Awakener for God-realization	
—Assia E. Malkiel	.. 271
39. Living Ideal of Universal Religion	
—Per Winther	.. 272
40. What Shall I Call Thee, Gurudev	
—Swami Narayananda	.. 273
41. Divine Life in Service of Humanity	
—Marjorie Avery	.. 274
42. Blessed, Divine Mission for the Good of All	
—V. Narayana Mallaya	.. 275
43. Inspiring Messages from the Master	
—Olive Werner	.. 276
44. Perfect Man and Karma Yogi	
—S.P. Gidwani	.. 277
45. In a Strange Way Appears the Guru	
—Ferdinand Blazek	.. 278
46. Beautiful Influence of Mighty Spiritual Giant	
—J. Hightower	.. 278
47. How Film Industry Can Help Educate Man	
—Swami Sivananda	.. 279
48. Incarnation of the Divine	
—Werner Schmickl	.. 280
49. Basic Religion of Sivananda	
—Swami Sadananda	.. 281

	<i>Pages</i>
50. Ardent Prayer Works a Miracle —Vishan Dass Wadhva	.. 287
51. Yoga Arc of Swamiji —Is-Haq Daoud	.. 288
52. One Week at Sivanādashram —P.M. Govender	.. 289
53. Precepts Through Simple Aphorisms —Swami Sivananda	.. 290
54. Glory That Will Never Fade —Indrajit Sharma	.. 293
55. My Personal Experiences of the Master	
—Hildegard Bittner	.. 294
56. Valued Contribution to Spiritual Revival	
—T.L. Venkataram Iyer	.. 295
57. Swamiji's Influence in South Africa —Rubasoundrie Moodley	.. 298
58. Proclaim the Gospel of Divine Life —Swami Sivananda	.. 299
59. Sivananda on Kundalini Yoga —M.P. Pandit	.. 300
60. Saint of Ananda Kutir —Hari Prasad	.. 302
61. Guide and Protector of the Devout —K.L. Mathur	.. 303
62. Treasure I Possess and Preserve —Rukmini Krishnamoorthy	.. 305
63. Future of Humanity —Swami Sivananda	.. 306
64. Voice of Love —Sivananda-Shantananda	.. 307
65. Palm of Sivananda —S. Subba Rao	.. 308
66. Fulfilment of a Beseeching Heart —Sivananda-Suppiah	.. 312
67. Fountainhead of Love and Service —Eve Katzman	.. 314
68. Thou Art the All, My Master —Sivananda-Margarita	.. 315
69. Impressions of Gratitude to the Guru —K. Kamalan	.. 315
70. Practice of Meditation —Swami Sivananda	.. 316
71. An Ode to Sivananda —Swami Jyotirmayananda	.. 322
72. What We Learn from Sivananda's Life and Sadhana	
—Kausik	.. 323
73. Message for All —Swami Sivananda	.. 334
74. Sivananda Kusumanjali —Jayashankar Raval	.. 335
75. Embodiment of Divine Love —A.G.R. Sharma	.. 336
76. Spirit of Jesus Christ in Sivananda —Fra J. Wilhelm	.. 337
77. Saviour is Always with Us —Meernaidoo Somanah	.. 338
78. Universal Spiritual Guide —Dr. S. Krishna Rao	.. 339
79. Precious Contributions to the Path of Divine Life	
—H.E. Happacher	.. 340

	<i>Pages</i>
80. Light on the Spiritual Horizon —Frederico Bernstein	.. 340
81. Spiritual Role of India —Swami Sivananda	.. 341
82. Human Aspect of Sivananda —Swami Sivananda-Hridayananda	342
83. Nourisher of the Soul with Universal Wisdom	
—George E. Fowler	.. 345
84. First Meeting with Swamiji —Anand Prakash Talwar	.. 346
85. Janaka's Realization —Swami Sivananda	.. 347
86. Divine Ministration in the Service of Mankind	
—Swami Venkateswarananda	.. 348
87. God as Divine Light —Swami Venkatesananda	.. 349
88. Seventyfour Today —N.C. Ghosh	.. 350
89. Precious Teachings on Self-purification	
—Mrs. Kwee Liong Tian-Han	.. 351
90. One Who Has Found His Way to God —Paula Schüdel	.. 351
91. Glory That is Our Gurudev —Yogi Anand	.. 352
92. Sivananda Be Praised —G. Robinson	.. 352
93. Poems of Sivananda	.. 353
94. Opening of Sivanandashram in Durban	
—Logie Naidoo	.. 354
95. Service of the Seekers of Truth —Marija Rzeczycka	.. 354
96. Architect of Spiritual Life —Swami Pranavananda	.. 355
97. Questions and Answers —Swami Sivananda	.. 357
98. List of Sivananda Schools of Yoga and Sivanandashrams	.. 358
99. Uniqueness of the Gospel of Gurudev —Swami Chidananda	.. 359
100. Three Aspects of the Divine Mother —Swami Sivananda	.. 361
101. Some Observations on the Palm of Sivananda	
—N.G. Ghosh Hazra	.. 362
102. Practice of Concentration and Meditation (German Translation)	.. 363
103. Swami Sivananda Singt (German)	.. 365
104. Light-Power-Wisdom (French)	.. 366
105. Sayings of Sivananda (Spanish)	.. 367
106. Meditations of Sivananda (Danish)	.. 369
107. Sayings of Sivananda (Hungarian)	.. 370
108. Progress of Sivananda's Mission—Important Events and Features	.. 371
109. Ashram News and Notes	.. 374





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*Top row, from left: Meer-
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Santoshananda, Olive Wer-
ner, Swami Chidananda;
second row: Swami Venka-
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*third row: Elizabeth Blazek, Candida von Harrach, Susano Ortiz, Ferdinand Blazek;
bottom row: Balwant Singh Puri, Swami Paramananda, Lori Goehl, Indrajit Sharma;
bottom row: Paula Schudel, Marija Rzeczycka, Per Winther, and Werner Schmickl.*



DIVINE LIFE

VOL. XXII
No. 9

Swami Sivananda's 74th
Birthday Souvenir Issue

SEPTEMBER
1960

Salutation to the Guru

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

भवारण्यप्रविष्टस्य दिङ्मोहभ्रान्तचेतसः ।

येन संदर्शितः पन्थास्तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

Salutation to that preceptor who has pointed the way out to one that has entered the 'forest' of worldly existence and is bewildered due to the loss of the awareness of the direction in it.

ज्ञानादित्यधियो ह्यनन्तमुखसिन्ध्वन्तर्वहिश्चैकता-
पानस्नानकुतः स्वतस्तु गलितानात्मान आत्मस्वतः ।
लोकानुग्रहकाङ्क्षा भुवि नृधीयोग्यैकसत्कर्मिणः
हन्तः सन्ति वसन्तवद्धि गुरवस्तेभ्यो महद्भ्यो नमः ॥

Saints are like the spring season, fulfilling the needs of the people—who, taking compassion on the world, act in a manner suitable to the teaching and training of the mentality of human beings on earth, though, by themselves, they shine as luminous suns of wisdom, drink deep from, and take bath in, the limitless ocean of bliss, move in it, inside and outside, equally, free from the notion of duality, knowing that all is the

one Self. To such great preceptors be our prostrations.

संगः सत्सु विधीयतां भगवतो भक्तिर्दृढा धीयतां
शान्त्यादिः परिचीयतां दृढतरं कर्मांशु संयज्यताम् ।
सद्बिद्वानुपसर्प्यतां प्रतिदिनं तत्पादुके सेव्यतां
ब्रह्मैकान्तमर्थ्यतां श्रुतिशिरोवाक्यं समाकर्ण्यताम् ॥

Have the company of the wise. Develop firm devotion to the Lord. Cultivate virtues like tranquillity, and the like. Abandon selfish actions. Approach a proper Teacher. Serve his feet. Aspire for the one, eternal Brahman. Listen to the great precepts of the *Upanishads*.

महाक्रियो ज्ञाननिधिः परित्राड् आत्मस्वरूपेण जगत्स्वरूपः ।
इति स्थितो लोकहिते रतोऽयं जीयान्छिवानन्दगुह्यगोरीयान् ॥

Triumph be to Sivananda, the Guru, the great Sannyasin, the reservoir of knowledge, the performer of great deeds, who works for the good of the world, realizing that the world exists as the form of his own Self.

Conquer Materialism Through Spirituality

(Seventyfourth Birthday Message of Swami Sivananda)

If there were available today some instrument which can record the last thought of every dying materialist, you will be surprised to find the unanimity. They all feel: "Alas, I have wasted my time running after the shadow. Had I devoted to the *substance* a hundredth of the time I devoted to the shadow, I would have found my path illumined now."

Beware of the lure of materialism—worldliness. Do not give it asylum in your heart. Look out and watch. They that glorified wealth, groan under it. They that sought pleasure eventually writhe in agony. It is not their fault; it is the nature of sense-object. So, beware. Resolutely turn away from worldliness. Come, join the glorious society of spiritual men who rejoice in imperishable wisdom.

In the hall of wisdom, you are greeted at the very entrance by the sentinels—peace and contentment. You find it brilliantly illuminated by the light of real knowledge. Your burden is lightened, too. Wisdom eases your tensions. You know the origin, the meaning and the goal of life; this knowledge is very much unlike the information you gather from books. In the hall of wisdom, knowledge is synonymous with experience. He who thus knows, goes beyond grief and delusion. He is in the land of eternal Sunshine, out of the reach of pain and ignorance, lust and egotism, birth and death.

Through the windows of this hall, you see mankind blindfolded by the veil of materialism, groping in the mire of suffering. Now it is your turn to call them in, to invite them to share the wisdom, the light, the joy you now experience.

Material prosperity or the necessary means to counteract the ill effects of pover-

ty on a universal scale could not, of course, be regarded as undesirable. Material wealth is necessary for the good of the people. It is only the craze for material enjoyment, to the detriment of spiritual values, that is decried. Materialism as a cult is bad enough, for it destroys the moral refinement in man. Man cannot live by bread alone. There is also something called the hunger of the soul.

The need of humanity is a reassessment of values—material and religious. Just as material interests should not run contrary to the moral well-being of man, so also, religious values should not be opposed to his material well-being. Religious or spiritual values are not cultivated through dull, mechanical ritualism, but in the school of life through ethical conduct and self-discipline. It is the ethical base that constitutes the bed-rock of spirituality and all great achievements. In the absence of it thrives the perversion of materialism.

The young plant of life is full of vigour. Take care of it, and it will grow into a gigantic tree and yield shelter and fruit. The youth all over the world today is spiritually starved. The poison of materialism is polluting the very sap of humanity's existence. Find the remedy speedily. Educate the youth in ethics and spiritual values. Instil in them right knowledge and the universal tenets of truth, non-injury and purity. Let the youth be led along the road of righteousness. This is the greatest nation-building activity and service that one could do to the country and humanity at large.

May God bless you all. May you all lead the divine life, and usher in an era of peace and goodwill.

Messages and Greetings

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE PEOPLE

(*Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India*)

In these days of increasing secularization of life, it is good to draw the attention of the people that there is another dimension to human existence, and the works of Swami Sivananda contribute to the quickening of the spiritual life of the people.

YEOMAN SERVICE FOR THE REVIVAL OF SPIRITUALITY

(*Hon. Sri Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Speaker of Lok Sabha*)

We have won freedom, without shedding a single drop of blood. Those that have eyes to see will discover that this has been a miracle, and the spiritual force on which Gandhiji relied has brought about this (bloodless) revolution.

All tendencies in the modern world are towards increasing the physical strength or force, which does not count at all without spiritual or divine force behind it. Physical force by itself is as ineffective as a body without a soul.

The Divine Life Society, through its magazines, has been rendering yeoman service to revive spirituality in India and in the world. May His Holiness Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj live a full hundred and twenty years, if not more, and may *The Divine Life* magazine have a perpetual existence of useful service to humanity.

All the ills attributed to public men, officers and others, such as corruption and indifference, are due to a want of faith in a Divine Power which shapes the destinies of men. Materialism is fast sweeping over our land, and social values are changing.

We were never worshippers of wealth or power but only of character and conduct. Dharma or duty was taught to our people, but not rights. Nobody now thinks of duty or Dharma but only of rights. Individualism (in a negative sense), which is the law of the jungle, is gaining ground and destroying the collective concept of humanity.

Our ancients taught us to consider the whole creation as a single unit, the manifestation or the Viswarupa of God, who is immanent therein; they taught that we are all limbs of the same Universal Body. Development of this consciousness or seeing God in the universe is the goal of the individual. This idea must be re-emphasized and constantly kept before the public.

I pray to Lord Venkateswara that He may grant a full 120 years of life to H.H. Swami Sivanandaji and confer on him His choicest blessings and increase his popularity and usefulness.

MORAL AND CULTURAL REGENERATION

(*Hon. Sri Gulzarilal Nanda, Union Minister of Labour and Planning*)

Moral regeneration and dissemination of spiritual culture alone can provide a permanent cure to the ills of the suffering humanity. They convert the feelings of hatred and jealousy into those of oneness and fraternity. Practice of Yoga and per-

formance of Vedic rites lead to physical fitness and mental purity, which enable man to perceive the truth. The present-day world needs, more than ever before, moral and cultural regeneration to save itself from continuing tension and even extinction.

Swami Sivanandaji has rendered invaluable service to mankind by his message of spiritual enlightenment. I send my heartiest felicitations and best wishes on his 74th birthday.

HUMAN AFFECTIONS AND SPIRITUAL EMINENCE

(Hon. Dr. B. Gopala Reddy, Union Minister of Revenue)

I had the privilege of meeting Swamiji and hearing his message on the first of May (this year) at a function at Rishikesh. He impressed me very much indeed, not merely by his spiritual eminence but by his human affections. His message is spreading far and wide, and even in distant lands his literature is being studied.

His Jnana Dana (gift of spiritual knowledge) will be of great benefit to all the recipients if only they would care to ponder over (his teachings). The initiation into spiritual learning may be a little difficult in the beginning, but once it starts, it goes on in its quest for divine joy.

I send my respectful salutations to Swamiji and wish the function on the occasion of his birthday every success.

THE GURU GIVES US THE NECTAR OF GOD-REALIZATION

(Hon. Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia, Deputy Defence Minister)

What else can I say but that we are happy to have Swami Sivanandaji in this world in his present body? It is the body which we refer to when we say it is his 74th birthday. The real Swamiji is not bound by time or space, and is not mortal. But the fact remains that Swamiji has come to this world under the divine order of God for a particular purpose, and that is for the dissemination of Jnana, so that others may live in peace with themselves and thus with others also. It is this peace that all of us are seeking. And where can we get it? The great Guru Arjan Devji said:

सुर नर मुन जन अमृत खोजदे सो अमृत गुर ते पाया ।

पाया अमृत गुर कृपा कीनी सच्चा मन बसाया ।

Thus that nectar can be got only from the Guru. When we get this, we should be grateful to the Guru for his kindness in giving us the nectar which is realization of the existence of God in us. Swamiji has been spreading this message personally and through his writings which are voluminous. The organizers of his mission have thought of spreading this message by reprinting his works in English and also making them available in the Indian languages, thus bringing it within the reach of the millions in this country who do not know English. Towards this, I venture to send all my good wishes for its success, and pray that God may spare Swamiji's body for quite some years more, so that we may drink in his fountain of kindness and love.

HUMANITY NEEDS A BALANCED OUTLOOK

(Hon. Sri S.V. Krishnamoorthy Rao, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha)

Spiritual knowledge alone can give some solace and a balanced outlook to humanity in this age of atomic weapons and cold war. The Jnana Dana (gift of knowledge) by Swamiji will go a long way in creating that spiritual outlook. It is the need of the hour. May his message reach the yearning hearts of humanity and bring peace and happiness to the suffering world. I wish his efforts every success.

Sivananda's Influence on Our Lives

(Yogiraj Santoshananda and Sri F.V. Klara, Czechoslovakia)

I am using this opportunity to express, on behalf of all the disciples and admirers of Swami Sivananda in Czechoslovakia, heartfelt wishes for the good health and long life of our beloved Guru. At the same time we must express our sincere love and gratitude for the immense care he is showing for all of us. We are constantly following the Swami's spiritual instructions and are extremely grateful for the love he is pouring out on us.

It is due to the grace of God and our Guru that we, his disciples, have equanimity and perfect contentment, which the practice of the Vedantic teaching unfolds. We are happy that, through our Master's care, we now have in this country all the principal works written by him in Czech translation, for those who cannot read the original. Our Master's *Integral Yoga* has proved to be of invaluable help in our endeavours. His shining example has been a light to show us the way and lead us on. We have adapted a slogan to give us encouragement: "When Swamiji is with us, no one dares to be against us."

Our Guru's immense love to all living beings will ever remain a lofty ideal for all. We have learnt from his teachings that spiritual freedom cannot be secured through satisfying our senses but through reducing our desires.

A perfect knowledge of the Yogic

tenets offers a complete explanation of all the current events occurring around us as well as of the causes of human suffering. Studying our Master's works, so highly charged with supreme wisdom, we are able to penetrate far beyond mere words. We are happy to experience that we can read Swamiji's ideas differently, which, in the richness of their shades, offer so many explanations.

Swamiji's explanations are extremely simple, easy to understand and accessible to our European thinking. The perfection and ease with which Swamiji masters his pen while tackling the most complicated problem in his unique way, are so enchanting that they almost force a disciple to achieve his spiritual objective in a short time. His lofty emotions dive deep into the profound truths of life, revealing them to his devotees.

The spell of his avocations unlocks for us for the first time the immaculate refuge of Indian wisdom. Armed with his noble doctrine, we are aware of what we think and why we do. His direct influence on the souls of his disciples, living in remote corners of the world, is truly enormous. We have learnt from our Master that true humility and love are direct paths to God. We also know that we are contacting God Himself through Swami Sivananda's teachings. We pray for his health and God's blessings.

Standard-Bearer of India's Ancient Wisdom

(Sardar Balwant Singh Puri, CIE, OBE)

It has been my good fortune to have come under the spiritual influence of Swami Sivanandaji for a considerable period of time now, and like so many of his numerous followers I have derived great spiritual benefits from my association with him. I cannot claim that I have imbibed his spiritual teachings in full, but they have definitely contributed towards my peace of mind.

In an age seething with rank materialism, when spiritual values are at a discount, it is merciful that there is amidst us at present a personality like Swami Sivanandaji who holds the torch of spirituality high and at whose feet one can learn the eternal Truth and from whom one can get inspiration for the attainment of spiritual uplift.

BENEFACTOR OF HUMANITY

In a peaceful Ashram on the banks of the sacred Ganga, situated at the foot of the holy Himalayas, which have nurtured from time immemorial countless sages and seers that India has proudly produced, dwells the Rishi of Rishikesh, a standard-bearer of our motherland's ancient wisdom and a real benefactor of humanity. His life is an epitome of all that is best for the rejuvenation of the sinking mind and the slumbering soul of men and women who are in the vicious grip of degradation and ignorance.

Swamiji stands there in sylvan environs with his magnetic personality, always providing unfailing guidance to ennoble our mind and spirit, so that life in this afflicted world may become as noble and elevated as it can be. For over three decades Swamiji has made Rishikesh his place of retreat and transformed it into a spiritual

asylum for all, irrespective of caste, creed or religion.

THE ASHRAM

Swamiji's Ashram at Rishikesh is the nerve-centre of his activities. Every activity here is a Yoga, with no desire for profit and is executed without attachment, according to the ideal described as Nishkamya Karma in the *Gita*. The emotional and devotional aspirants can do here Kirtan in the Bhajan Hall or perform Puja at the Mandir. People who want to help others have ample scope for work in the Sivananda General Hospital, Eye Hospital, Ayurvedic Pharmacy, or in the main Office. The philosophically inclined can meditate peacefully in the Himalayan solitude and study the scriptures in the well-equipped library. Swamiji advocates a combination of all these for everyone so that one can have all-round spiritual advancement.

Beginning life as a doctor in Malaya, young Kuppuswami (for that was Swamiji's former name) soon found that life was greatly circumscribed in those surroundings, and, driven by an urge for spiritual knowledge, he came back to India and was initiated, in 1924, into the monastic life by Swami Viswananda, of the Sringeri Order, and was given the monastic name, Swami Sivananda Saraswati. This transformation of a doctor into a full-fledged Sannyasi was not a surprise in his case. A descendant of sage Appaya Dikshita, the great Vedic commentator, spirituality was running in Swamiji's veins, and his Sannyasa was only the natural result of inherited family traditions.

COSMOPOLITAN OUTLOOK

Swamiji's spiritual outlook is cosmopolitan and universal. Though as a philoso-

pher he is a follower of the Advaita school, he combines in himself the wisdom of all the systems of Hindu philosophy. He possesses the quintessence of all spiritual knowledge in all its aspects. It is difficult to say whether Swamiji is greater as a Bhakta or a Karma Yogi or as a Jnani. He resembles Shankara in his Jnana, Chaitanya in his Bhakti and Buddha in his compassion.

Indeed, it is Swamiji's great compassion for mankind that has provided him with his mission in life. His mission is to bring spiritual revival and peace to the world, and, at the same time, be of service to it in various other ways. Swamiji is no recluse in the ordinary sense of the word. He believes not only in saving his soul but the souls of others. The misery and sorrow that afflict mankind profoundly pain him, and he is here to bring a solution to man's ills by pointing out the right way of life and the path to salvation.

Clarifying his mission, once he said: "I am here upon this earth to reclaim it, to turn it into a beautiful paradise, a paradise most suitable for the denizens of the earth to dwell therein peacefully, joyfully and blissfully; I have come into this world with a sword to cut off all your attachment and to make you free."

JIVANMUKTA

The perfect sage that he is, he has reached the highest pinnacle one could aspire for, namely, the Jivanmukta state. His consciousness has become one with the cosmic Consciousness, his mind has merged with the universal Mind. His actions are in tune with the forces of Nature. Although he is in this blissful state, there are many things that one can learn by closely watching him.

The daily activities and the behaviour of

Swamiji towards various kinds of people, how he tackles the different problems one commonly meets with everyday, are all an eye-opener to one who is eager to learn. The love and consideration with which Swamiji treats people, the comforts and conveniences he showers on the visitors and guests to the Ashram, the affectionate way with which he gives bountiful gifts, the tender care with which he nurses the sick—these are some of the things one can observe in Swamiji's day-to-day life.

DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

The Divine Life Society is a beautiful flower blossoming out of Swamiji's spiritual tree. Followers from all over the world are attracted by its fragrance, and they derive great benefit by taking shelter under the wide-spreading tree of spirit and wisdom. The motto of the Divine Life Society is: Serve, Love, Meditate, Realize. Simple objectives, but noble in conception.

Swamiji's clarion call to lead a divine life is exceptional and praiseworthy. What distinguishes this Society from so many others is that here there is neither secrecy nor exclusiveness. The appeal is universal. The methods are open and rational. There is no attempt at regimentation or mechanization of the personality of the aspirant. "Where Swamiji excels is in his intellectual integrity and readiness to discuss and convince his disciples and aspirants." Swamiji's disciples are scattered throughout India, Europe and America, where Branches of the Divine Life Society are working. The Society is making a significant contribution towards the spiritual regeneration of the world.

May Swamiji live long in perfect health in order to continue to inspire and guide the groping masses of humanity towards the Light of Wisdom.

Sivananda and Ramana Maharshi

(Sri P.C. Divanji, Bombay)

(I met the great saint) Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh in the latter half of 1950, when he came to Bombay during his All-India tour. I had occasions to see and hear him at three different places. I was much impressed with his personality, his eloquence and his method of appealing to the hearts of the people assembled to hear him either sincerely or out of curiosity.

About a year and a half after that I had gone to his Ashram and stayed there for a few days. I found it to be a big institution, having a large number of activities, suited to the requirements of a large variety of Sadhakas (aspirants), conducted under the supervision of Sannyasins, each an expert in his line, and under the over-all supervision of the Swami himself, a capable organizer and task-master, and, although a Sannyasin, yet possessing the qualities of a thorough man-of-the-world.

LIFE'S MISSION

(Swamiji) is also very learned, both in the orthodox and modern sense, a voluminous writer, has a very good command over the English language and possesses the qualities of a good orator. He believes it to be his mission in life to spread the knowledge of the Advaita Vedanta and the various branches of the Yoga system, which in his view are not antagonistic but complementary to each other, and should, therefore, be followed simultaneously by bringing about a synthesis between them.

The writings of many of his intelligent followers from all the religious communities and races show that many of them have been convinced that he possesses an occult power and is destined to be acknowledged as a world-prophet, capable of spreading the message of the necessity of

changing the basis of modern civilization into a religious or divine one, so as to inaugurate an era of mutual love and right understanding between individuals and nations.

(Swami Sivananda) has trained up many Indian and foreign teachers, and they have already been spreading that message in India and many (Western) and some Asian countries. Needless to say, I have kept myself in touch with the institution ever since I visited it, and try to follow as best as I can the many practical hints as to the practice of Yoga which appear in his articles in the *Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Weekly* and his books, with which he favours me off and on, but I consider myself not sufficiently equipped to be one of his specially-favoured devotees.

There are only two (saints), contact with whom has been the cause of permanent spiritual benefit to me. They are Sri Ramana Maharshi and Swami Sivananda. Both of them were born of South Indian Brahmin parents, both of them devoted their lives to the pursuit of the knowledge of the Self within their hearts, by the process of self-integration, and attained it, not only to their own inner satisfaction, but also to an extent which enabled them to become useful to several other embodied souls to make further progress towards the attainment of the same goal, although several of them had for their objective the attainment of Self-knowledge, so far as that could be secured without severing their physical connection with their family relations and worldly possessions.

This was no doubt due to the saints being endowed, after Self-realization, with an occult power which enabled them to

touch the innermost vital chord of the hearts of those persons and give it such a turn as to change their whole outlook on life. The above outstanding features were in the case of each of them mixed up with certain other peculiar features, which, from an objective view-point, marked them out as Jivanmuktas of two distinct types.

THE MAHARSHI

The Maharshi was a boy of 16, when he left his maternal uncle's house at Madura in order "to meet his Father Arunachala at Tiruvannamalai." He was then studying in the 4th or 5th (Form) at a Missionary High School. Even prior to that he had an inner urge to know and investigate the truth about his existence which made itself manifest as Self-consciousness. This made him fancy himself dead according to the popular notion and begin thinking about the nature of the individual soul.

After some time he started on the journey to Tiruvannamalai, the seat of God Arunachala, lived for some time in the temple there and then shifted to Mt. Arunachala behind it. After he was required to get down to the plain below, he made his abode there, and after his brother became a Sannyasin and began to live there, a regular guest-house was started under the latter's management.

For the first twelve years after renunciation, he had observed complete silence, but even after he began to speak, he broke his silence only so far as it was necessary to answer any question put to him by any devotee. Inquisitive visitors had several times put to him the question why he did not go out on a preaching tour, and his answer used to be that he did not see the necessity of doing so, and when someone drew his attention to the general feeling of dissatisfaction with the prevailing world-

conditions, he used to say that He who had created multifariousness in the world, which (the Maharshi) looked upon as illusory, must be caring for it.

Whatever writing (the Maharshi) has left behind had been undertaken by him at the request of his devotees to give the benefit of his wisdom, not only to those who can at once rise to his level of philosophical thinking, but also those who can do so gradually under competent guidance. The wisdom that has been embodied in them is not the result of a study of and reflection over the works which the past masters have left behind them for posterity, but is that of his own experience commencing from the date on which he felt an urge to inquire about the truth as to existence, which he had done without any external help, except from the *Periya Purana*, a Tamil work treating of the extraordinary incidents in the lives of 63 saints of Tamilnad, from which he had picked up the ideal of being a saint, in perfect tune with the Infinite.

DIFFERENT PERSONALITY

The personality of Swami Sivananda was cast in a different mould. He was a full-grown youth, 36 or 37 years old, when he took a formal Sannyasa Diksha. Prior to that he had taken a medical (career) and had been in active practice, though in his own philanthropic way. Moreover, being a scion of the same family as the celebrated, voluminous writer in Sanskrit, Appaya Dikshit, he had easy access to works on religion, philosophy and Ayurveda, and had inherited a firm faith in God as being kind enough to respond to sincere prayers addressed to Him with a selfless motive.

Hence, even when he was practising allopathic medicine in the Malayan Peninsula he had been making use of his knowledge of Ayurvedic medicine and devout

prayers to the Almighty for the speedy recovery of his patients. Moreover, although he did not disdain earning money from the patients, who could afford to pay him, he lavishly spent his surplus money in helping the poor (among them) financially for the purchase of medicines, fruit and milk, which he considered necessary for their recovery and nourishment.

With such a background, he set himself to the task of getting into direct communion with the Almighty, with the selfless ambition of being much more helpful to humanity in attaining spiritual freedom and relief from physical ailments and disabilities. His application to the task being wholehearted, he attained his objective within six years and then turned his attention to the accomplishment of his life's mission.

The Almighty has helped him to get together a fairly large number of well-to-do householders to render financial assistance and an ever-growing number of intelligent, well-educated and yet selfless Sannyasins, anxious to win his favour by looking to the smooth running of the several departments

started and being started by him towards the fulfilment of that mission.

Although he is well-grounded in the knowledge of the Advaita doctrine of Sri Sankaracharya and has assigned in the curriculum of his Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy an honoured place to the study of the works of that school of Vedanta, he firmly believes that Sravana (hearing or study of the scriptures) must necessarily be followed by Manana (contemplation) and Nididhyasana (deep meditation) and that so long as one's embodied existence continues one must continue to be engaged in some one or other kind of selfless social activity. So firm is his conviction on this point that he once declared publicly that he was prepared to take as many more human births as may be necessary for the fulfilment of his mission, should it remain unfulfilled in this life.

(A part of a Paper submitted to the second seminar—the theme of which was "The Saints"—held by the Indian branch of the Union for the Study of the Great Religions, in 1956, in Madras, by courtesy to which the above article is published.)

SAVIOUR OF OUR TIMES

(Sri E.B. Mudd, London)

One could only look with tremendous admiration at the achievement of the Divine Life Society. The wonderful work that is being done to promote world peace, to raise moral and ethical standards, to teach universal, brotherly love—all these have been possible through the divine leadership of its founder, Sri Swami Sivanandaji, to whom countless people look with awe and wonder as a saviour of our times. Now, when all seems to be enveloped in the dreariness of materialism he and the Divine Life Society stand out like a bulwark, a strong fortress, of hope to those who

seek solace and peace.

For me Yoga has filled a void; it has opened a vista of unlimited progress,—something to aspire for. It has enriched my daily life, given me better health and a fervent longing for spiritual growth. In my thoughts, I am never far away from Rishikesh. May the Society flourish and may we ever increase its growth. May its ideals flood the whole world with love and peace.

I send my heartiest wishes for the birthday of Swami Sivananda.

Gurudev and His Life-Transforming Teachings

(Sri Erik Schmickl, Pretoria, South Africa)

"Those who realize the eternal presence of the Lord within their hearts are endowed with goodness and spiritual beauty, and their lives are a perpetual festival of joy."

—Bhagavata

Situated on the banks of the holy Ganga, there stands a dynamic centre, SIVANANDASHRAM, the heart of the Divine Life Society. Amidst this pure atmosphere charged with intense spirituality, dynamic service to humanity is being done. Wide dissemination of spiritual knowledge, untiring and ceaseless service of the sick, the poor, the suffering and the needy, and training people in Yoga and Vedanta, are the activities of the Society.

The great aim of the Society is to uplift the world from the darkness born of ignorance, in which the people are steeped generally, into the glorious realms of peace and bliss, eternal happiness and joy. The Society endeavours to promote goodwill and understanding, and to awaken the spirit of selflessness, and love towards one another, so that this earth may no longer be a place of fear, unrest and warfare, but a glorious haven of peace and happiness.

COMPASSION PERSONIFIED

Centered amidst this dynamic activity, there is the glorious guiding light of the Lord, His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, who since his childhood possessed great compassion and a large and a pure heart which melted at the sight of human suffering. So great is this glorious being that few have succeeded in fathoming his depths. Sri Gurudev possesses a heart which ceaselessly overflows with love and kindness.

Hundreds of books are freely distributed to aspirants and seekers all over the world every month. Medical treatment is

given to the needy, love and kindness are diffused where there is hatred, joy where there is sorrow and suffering, strength where there is weakness, light where there is darkness, peace where there is restlessness, hope where there is despair, and knowledge where there is ignorance.

It is said that the sins of many births can be wiped out in a moment by one glance from the gracious eyes of God. I cannot describe the depth of what I feel, and what Swamiji is to me. All I can say is that the compassionate and loving eyes of God are at Sivanandashram, and have helped many, transformed and moulded many, shed great love on many, and, if we look within, we too shall find the eyes of God there, gazing with pure, divine love at us. They only seek to remove our ignorance, and to lift us to the great, eternal heights of immortality. We must daily pray with sincerity and earnestness, for God looks into our hearts, and not to the words of man.

SPIRITUAL LOTUS

Sri Ramakrishna said: "When the lotus blossoms, bees come of their own accord to gather the honey. When the lotus of a man's heart blossoms in the joy of God, spiritual aspirants flock to him." Many such bees are found around Sri Gurudev, who is a great and rare emblossomed lotus indeed. These bees are all his glorious disciples, devotees and selfless workers, amongst whom a few have already, under his guidance, realized the eternal presence of the Lord within their hearts.

Being in the presence of Swamiji, one

sees the embodiment of eternal serenity, peace, infinite Ananda, joy, selflessness, egolessness and divine love. He gives so much that his heart is ever full. So full is his heart that it constantly overflows with love and compassion unto all who are there to receive. In him is seen the embodiment of the wonderful symbol of the Divine Life Society, which shows the way to a glorious realization through putting into daily practice the beautiful, harmonized and synthesized teachings of Sri Gurudev.

GLORIOUS TEACHING

Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize and be free, are the beautiful synthesized teachings of Swamiji for the twentieth century.

We are taught to serve humanity selflessly and untiringly. In the measure we serve, God shall serve us. Karma Yoga, one of the limbs of the Yoga of synthesis, is the first stage for the majority of aspirants, leading to purity of heart and mind. With the purity of heart, intense love and devotion for the Lord manifest themselves.

Swamiji teaches us to ruthlessly slay egotism, lust and pride; to forgive those who hurt us; to calmly bear insult and injury; to ever have a peaceful mind; to remember the Lord at all times by constantly chanting and repeating His names; and to cultivate universal love and endurance. This can be done by daily prayers and meditation, and by spiritualizing all activities, consecrating them and their fruits as well as oneself in total, unconditional, self-surrender unto the feet of the Lord.

We must learn to dissociate ourselves from conditions such as: "I am sick, I am in pain, I am hurt, I did this, this is mine," etc., for the Self is free from all action. We must cultivate dispassion, and discrimination between the real and the unreal, the right and the wrong.

LOVE AND GIVE

As we love, we shall be loved in return. Love frees one from all bonds. Love is God. God is love. We are, therefore, taught to love all equally, for true divine love is unselfish and untainted. It does not confine itself to a single object or an individual only; it embraces the *whole*. Hatred ceaseth not by hatred, but only by love. Thus spiritual love is another limb in Swamiji's Yoga of synthesis, and it is said to be the most beautiful path for this age, leading to a glorious God-realization.

We are taught to give. In the measure we give, we shall receive. It is by giving that we empty ourselves, and by emptying ourselves, we are filled. Give freely and selflessly with love, and expect nothing in return. We find this ideal in Sri Gurudev in a full measure. Look and see how full he is. His heart is overflowing from its fullness, and still he continues giving.

Putting to practice the given teachings of Swamiji, we will attain purity of heart, mind and intellect. It has been said: "Only the pure in heart shall see God, and only the pure in mind shall know God." Having known that, what else remains to be known? Thus by profound and constant and deep meditation, the last and the final stage, God, is revealed in the purified heart, and known in the purified mind.

Having known That, and seen That, the knower of That (Brahman), becomes That. There now is neither birth nor death, neither bondage nor freedom, neither Sadhana nor Samadhi, neither meditator nor meditated, neither seeker after liberation nor liberated. This is the truth and life eternal, the final beatitude and goal of life.

CLARION CALL

Hear the call of Gurudev: "Come, O my children of the world! Wake up, Life

is short and time is fleeting, and death is at thy door. Your future is built in your thoughts and deeds. As you think, so shall you become. This being the immutable law of nature, change your mode of thought, your mental attitude, this very moment. Do good actions. Be kind. Be good. Be compassionate. Develop right thinking, and have pure and holy desires. Root out all hatred; radiate love and compassion. Live a life of truth by leading the divine life, and be ever happy. Come, place your burden on my shoulder, be devoted, surrender unto the Lord, and I shall give thee the treasure of spiritual life."

Gurudev is the living embodiment of all the great incarnations, and all that he is teaching to us he himself has practised and is still practising even in greater scale—all for the sake of example and service unto humanity, showing the way to life eternal.

TRANSFORMATION

My personal contact with Swamiji is very difficult to put into adequate words. I shall not even endeavour to describe my inner experiences, because I know that I shall fail in my attempt.

Speaking from the depth of my heart I can only say that Gurudev is a very rare gem to be found in the world today. A gracious and divine Master like Gurudev should be grabbed with all hands and might, the moment he crosses one's path.

I think that Swamiji has found me long before I ever knew of his existence. Since my contact with him, vast changes occurred within me. I feel drawn very near to him, by his loving grace. Christ is to me something too deep to give expression to, likewise is Krishna and Gurudev. Silence alone will reveal their great glory and exalted state of eternal beatitude and perfection.

MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

One night, while I was with some fri-

ends, approximately 270 miles from home, I suddenly had an attack of illness. This was five months after I had contacted Swamiji by letter for the first time, and three months after I had received discipleship. As I felt the illness coming in the afternoon, I prayed many a time. It appeared as if Swamiji seemed to ignore me. This could not be so, for I was sure that he received my prayers, and would come in the hour of need.

Suddenly at night I went to bed with a violent attack of high fever. I tried praying again, but could not concentrate. Nevertheless I felt sure that Gurudev would not forsake me. My friends brought many medicines, but I refused them all with thanks, and assured them that I would be well again in the morning. Shortly I entered what appeared to be a state of delirium. I beheld Swamiji surrounded by a soft, deep blue and radiant halo of light. To my joy he had come. He talked to me many a time, and was with me all night. His eyes were filled with great love and light, and showed a softness full of compassion, mercy and understanding, and his face was lit with a heavenly radiance, and on his lips lingered a soft, kind, serene and loving smile.

The next day I was well again, but physically very weak from the attack of fever.

Since that night I became enslaved to Sri Gurudev's feet forever. I know now that I am his. Something great changed within me. I do not know what Swamiji did to me, but to become his eternal companion is all I want. Ever since that night I yearned to go to Swamiji, to Sivanandashram, and pray that I may be blessed to reach his feet soon.

Divine attachment to such great sages as Swamiji, is to me in itself a glorious path to eternal freedom.

May his grace and blessings be upon all for many years to come. Today in this peaceless world, men and nations can rediscover peace and bliss only at the fountain source of eternal wisdom—the Men of God like Gurudev Sivananda.

Omnipresent, Benevolent Guru

(Sri Sivananda Lalita, Beyrouth, Lebanon)

The Divine Life Society is a great help to the modern world. It gives a spiritual lift to the people, solace and peace to the afflicted, and light to those who are still in darkness. A powerful spiritual awakener to many, the Divine Life Society is a most wonderful humanitarian organization. Swami Sivananda supervizes the Ashram in every detail and scatters precious gems of spiritual knowledge all over the world. Swamiji is assisted by his secretaries, all of them advanced Yogis and sages. The most outstanding devotion is seen in those who serve Gurudev with great love and care. His disciples are like the Apostles of Jesus Christ. He is, indeed, a blessing to humanity.

The most salient aspect of Sri Gurudev is his omnipresence. He is literally everywhere and at the same time. No distance matters to him. He knows his disciples, inside and outside. No mother knows her children as well as he knows his disciples. No words can express his divine personality. He attracts people from all over the world. He is like a huge magnet. The devotees are continuously pouring into his holy abode from near and far. He is regarded by many as God in human form. All are attracted by his divine power.

I had the great fortune to know His Holiness, in the year 1956, through his valuable books. They impressed me very much and changed my life. But the crowning of my aspiration occurred in 1957 when Gurudev answered my prayers. I came to India and lived in the 'Abode of Bliss' for six months, under the motherly care of His Holiness. Daily I saw him in the Office uttering 'Om Tat Sat' while inspecting the parcels of books being sent out to devotees, thereby transmitting his blessings and spiritual vibrations to them all, residing in the different corners of the world.

Gurudev never begins or ends his work without prayers and Kirtan. The divine presence of Gurudev fills the whole of the surroundings of wherever he is. His Prasad is most delicious. One can never forget his motherly love and care. Even though I came back to Lebanon, my Gurudev was with me. He dwells wherever his devotees are. Nothing is easier for him than to appear in their meditation or in dream, to give advice. He lives in each devotee's own heart. I have once again come back to his Ashram. May Lord bless His Holiness with a long life for the benefit of humanity at large. May he guide us for many years to come. This is my heartfelt prayer.

SIGNIFICANCE OF BIRTHDAY

Every birth anniversary is a reminder that one more year has passed in the allotted span of one's life, and whether one has fruitfully spent the year in the service of the Lord, to whom it owed its earthly duration.

—Swami Sivananda

Life : Its Significance

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

The world is believed to be rotating on its axis and revolving round the sun. But the belief that it has an unchangeable mass and that its contents are localized bodies still persists. Is this well founded?

No one can deny that there is growth and transformation, movement and activity, everywhere, inside as well as outside. There is evolution, struggle to overcome limitation, eagerness to peep through oneself into another that is not yet known and seen. Change, vibration and an intensely busy life is to be observed in all organisms, in cells, in everything that manifests life. Not only this; there is no rest or *stasis* even in the so-called inanimate matter. There is activity therein, too.

It is well known that every activity is a tendency to reach a definite end. Change and transformation are purposive. And what of mind and thought? There is no thinking without a form or a shape. The mind is another name for a reservoir of forces that ever seek fulfilment in something other than themselves. Such is life. No motionless existence, no changeless passivity: it is all dynamism, change, unrest, perpetual endeavour!

URGE FOR SELF-EXPANSION

But towards what aim is all this effort? When you try to answer this question, you leave the world of science and common perception behind, and take a step into what is a little startling at first sight, but is the real mystery behind all urges, ambitions, loves, aspirations and works. It is the inability of a body, physical or mental, to rest contented in any circumscribed state, and, therefore, there is a pining in its core

to reach what is outside the boundary of its body, to possess all things, to be in a happy union with them all, in short, to participate in infinity. This looks surprising, because this is exactly what never strikes the mind of anyone in the great business of life.

A conscious endeavour to understand this secret and to adjust one's ways of living to the workings of this universal power beckoning everything to unity is called YOGA. So simple, yet so hard to grasp. And the mind, especially of man, does not immediately find it possible to reconcile itself with such an explanation of its desires and actions. It mostly follows the method of trial and error, and attempts to experiment with different things at different times in its search for a meaning of life.

In this process the mind naturally forms attachments to some and develops an aversion to others, for it cannot engage its attention to all things at once. This is the wrong method employed in the sense-world. This is Samsara. This is bondage. The way of Yoga is just the opposite. It is to express and feel oneness everywhere, —in oneself, in society, in the country, in the whole world.

ALL-PERVASIVE LIFE

Towards this end the world evolves. There is no really dead matter or inert force. It is all life, purpose, intention. We may say there is a universal cohesive Power which we call gravitation in physical bodies, magnetism in substances, love and devotion and sympathy in higher beings. All this is a reflection of the unity of the universe in a supremely intelligent Principle.

We call this God, Atman, Brahman, and the like. The very nature of this Principle calls for co-operation, absence of attachment and aversion, a transfusion, as it were, of oneself into all things. This is the

secret of ethics and morality, this is the ground of universal love and brotherhood. This is the significance of life, the way to peace and happiness. Aspirants, live up to it!

The Saint and His Institution

(Sri Lie Tjong Tiauw, Surabaya, Indonesia)

To come into contact with the Saint of 'Ananda Kutir' and to be under his guidance is really a great fortune.

In this world of tears and sorrows, our beloved Gurudev brings unto mankind, at a most trying period, the panacea of peace, tolerance and understanding.

His illuminating message, so clearly explained in his numerous writings, so easy to comprehend, brings solace to the suffering and enlightenment to the ignorant, leading us towards true happiness, peace and prosperity.

The Divine Life Society is a unique institution, whose sole objective is the promotion of a divine life of truth, purity, love and service for every man and woman, in accordance with the tenets of the practitioner's own religion. It is heartening that the Society has many Branches all over the world, serving and providing the seekers of truth all the inspiration and guidance for advancement in their respective paths, under the direct guidance of its Founder-

President, Swami Sivananda.

The Society brings out the essential, underlying unity and the fundamental oneness of all religions, helping to mould a living synthesis of all faiths and all paths of Sadhana for the realization of the Divine.

Swami Sivananda's teachings are the stepping-stones to reach the goal of life. The valuable books that I receive from time to time from him, and the precious letters of his replying to mine, advising, guiding and instructing with his noble teachings, have a very wholesome and benefic influence on my life, and I thank Swamiji sincerely for what he has done to me.

I feel that a change in my life has come over, and I fully believe that it is inspired by His Holiness. Indeed to KNOW SWAMIJÌ IS TO REALISE GOD!

I send him my best wishes and pray to God Almighty to spare him with us for many more years to come. May he lift the veil of darkness from the face of this world.

INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION AND GUIDANCE

(Sri Sivananda Lori Goehl, Munich)

The confidence and adoration reposed in Swami Sivananda from all sides of the globe are extraordinary. He applies his power of attraction over all kinds of people, for their good, and treats and guides everybody according to the individual's make-up, so that all can understand him according to one's own capacity of thinking. This needs tremendous patience, discrimination and dispassion. We are gradually made to follow his example. May joy and happiness reign with him always. To the festive event I send my greetings. May the birthday of His Holiness fill the hearts of his devotees with gratefulness and joy.

Divine Life Society and Its Illustrious Founder

(Sri Swami Paramananda)

SIGNIFICANT NAME

The very title of the organization called the 'Divine Life Society' suggests that it is an institution in which a number of persons are associated and bound by the ideal of divine life, for achieving a common interest, viz., Self-realization, through service of mankind. We usually find that many organizations, institutions and societies in the world are generally conducted with high aims and objectives, definite methods of work, with fixed duties and responsibilities for important office-bearers such as President, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries, Managers, Trustees and so on, as well as strict rules and regulations, limitations and restrictions for those who desire to join them as members. We also observe that the rules and regulations of various organizations are framed with a view to smoothly carry on their missions systematically. It is evident that such rules and disciplines enforced on the members are primarily responsible for the steady growth, progress and success of these institutions.

Now let us take the example of the Divine Life Society. What is the main difference between this Society and other similar organizations? A close study of the working of this institution reveals some of the salient features of the personality of Sri Swami Sivananda, its Founder, and his strange and novel methods adopted for running this world-wide organization. I believe that a knowledge of this will, in a way, be helpful to the readers for leading the life divine.

ORGANIZED SET-UP

Like most of the spiritual organiza-

tions, the Divine Life Society was established by Sri Swami Sivananda with some broad aims and objects such as the dissemination of divine knowledge, helping spiritual aspirants, serving the Mahatmas and Sadhus, rendering free medical aid to the sick and the poor, and to do all that is necessary for the uplift of mankind in general. This Society also has responsible office-bearers such as secretaries, trustees, departmental managers, several Branches and thousands of members all over the world. Its accounts of income and expenditure are properly maintained and duly audited, while its activities are reviewed in its annual reports. We also read about eminent persons from many parts of the world writing eulogically about the Founder and the valuable service rendered by him to humanity at large through the Divine Life Society.

STEADY GROWTH AND PROGRESS

I clearly recollect that, in 1936, when the Society was established, Sri Swami Sivananda, unmindful of his personal comforts, was living in a dilapidated hut, always busy in writing books and guiding aspirants through correspondence, and depending on the 'Kshetra' (alms-house for Sadhus) for his simple maintenance. Now, in great admiration for the silent service done to the world during the last 25 years, thousands of persons pay homage and express their gratitude to Sri Swamiji. As a token of their admiration and gratefulness for the benefit derived from this noble saint and his writings, devotees voluntarily contributed the necessary finance, and the result is that we find today such monumental

means of service as: the 'Annakshetra' which daily feeds about 400 persons, including the seekers of truth from various parts of India and other countries, who reside here, the visitors to the Ashram, as well as the poor and the sick; a large number of residential quarters for the inmates and the guests; a well-equipped Printing Press with several modern automatic machines; a Photo Studio with many types of cameras, projectors and tape-recorders for recording the day-to-day life and the mission of Swamiji, and his speeches, Bhajans and songs; and two Hospitals for general diseases and ophthalmic cases, equipped with up-to-date apparatuses, surgical instruments and latest drugs.

It will be difficult to fully enumerate within a short article the useful work turned out by the several allied institutions at the Ashram (the most prominent among which is the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy), and the number of publications and periodicals that are issued for the dissemination of knowledge. In addition to these, we also see two beautiful temples erected for common worship, and the 'Bhajan Hall' and the 'Satsang Bhavan' for common prayers, Forest Academy classes and public lectures. Annual reports of the Society show that it has over 300 Branches in many of the important cities in India and other parts of the world, to carry on similar activities.

SECRET OF SUCCESS

It will be highly interesting to note Sri Swamiji's methods of work, his principles, and the policy adopted by him, towards the inmates for running the Society in a successful manner.

From a deep observation of Sri Swamiji and the activities of the Society from its very beginning, I know very well that he did not have to use any magical power

at any time. He has not given any false hope or promise to the aspirants for their spiritual attainments or for becoming successful religious preachers. He has never approached rich persons for financial aid to build up the institution.

It is surprising to see that the Printing Press, the Publication League, the Ayurvedic Pharmacy, the 'Annakshetra,' the Hospitals and other allied institutions of the Divine Life Society, in fact, are never run on commercial lines. Numerous disciples, cultured and educated persons, well-trained Yogis, office-bearers and all those who stay in the Ashram, and also the devotees all over the world, do sincerely feel that it is only because of the greatness of Swamiji's personality and his matchless and untiring efforts this rapid progress that we see today in the Divine Life Society's activities has been possible, and, indeed, not because of any extraordinary contribution on their part, either by way of substantial work or financial help.

STRANGE METHODS AND POLICY

The Society, unlike many other institutions, does not have any fast or rigid rules and regulations. There is neither any capital to boast of, nor a permanent source of income to meet the vast amount of expenditure. It is run on day-to-day basis, on what the grace of God brings from the devotees. Its bank balance is always zero. We are amazed to see the peculiar policy of Sri Swamiji in his own words. He says:

"I heartily welcome all seekers of truth. Here you have all facilities, comforts, and conveniences, and you can feel quite at home. All aspirants can come and stay here for any length of period and follow any religion. They can eat (except non-vegetarian food), dress and live in any way suitable to their habits, taste and constitution. According to their temperament

and capacity, they can work in any of the departments, if they wish, and evolve through selfless service. It gives me great pleasure if they devote all their time and energy in prayer, Japa, meditation and study. I carefully attend to their needs and comforts. Any moment they can take whatever materials they have acquired from the Ashram and leave the place with joy, if they so desire, and settle down as office-workers or lead any kind of life they wish, or start Branches of the Divine Life Society or even run similar organizations in their own name and spend their life profitably. When people come to me, I do not look to their qualifications, capacities, merits, talents or evil qualities. I never ask for their testimonials or character certificates. I do not even ask for their family background. I welcome all men, women and youngsters, great scholars and philosophers, the sick and the poor, even lazy people and those who are quite unfit for the spiritual path."

We are all puzzled to see how Sri Swamiji can so successfully run the Society with such a strange policy and conglomerate menagerie.

When Gurudev comes to the Ashram's main office, he entertains the guests and the workers with coffee, tea, biscuits, sweets and fruits. He sometimes asks the guests and the inmates to deliver short lectures in any language and do a little Bhajan and Kirtan. At the same time he attends to his routine work.

He never claims to have Yogic powers, but from the result of his activities, we find only "miracles" at every step. When we carefully look to the details, we have to conclude that the very existence of the Ashram itself seems to be a great miracle.

SIMPLE START

Sri Swamiji has clearly explained his

policy in 1936, when the Society was established. That was in reply to a suggestion he received from a disciple, for raising funds to expand the activities of the institution. He says:

"I cannot undertake any lecture tour in Punjab for collecting funds to develop the Society. I do not care if the Society thrives or not. All what I want is to create divine vibrations and congenial environments everywhere for spiritual pursuit. All cannot evolve by rigorous Sadhana in remote Himalayan caves. Continuous Japa and meditation are found to induce sleep and drowsiness. People find it difficult to stick to a routine even for a few days steadily. Too much study creates bewilderment. Under the present conditions, advanced Yoga exercises are difficult for the common man. To have quick spiritual progress, peace, happiness and sound health, chalk out a daily routine with enough time for prayers, Japa, meditation, study, Kirtan and Mowna, and stick to the schedule without any leniency. Include light physical exercises, mild Pranayama and simple Asanas. Increase the period of Japa and prayers.

"Develop virtuous qualities. Destroy evil nature. Control the powerful, turbulent senses. Have Satsang. Associate yourself with those who are spiritually inclined. Serve the Mahatmas, the sick and the poor. Evolve through service. Do something solid. Let me have a report of your progress. Anyone who is doing a little Sadhana can consider himself a member of the Divine Life Society. Anyone who treads the path of truth can be my disciple. Start a Branch of the Society in your place and collect your friends and devotees to conduct Bhajan, Kirtan or at least study of philosophical works for half an hour on holidays. Include your family members,

children and servants, if you are unable to find members for your Branch. Print a small leaflet with spiritual lessons and distribute the copies among your friends. Sow the seed now. It will gradually grow and bring happy results to the world."

Thus with a simple start, Sri Swami Sivananda was successful in establishing hundreds of dynamic centres of spiritual pursuit all over the world. Today aspirants in large numbers gather in such centres and do collective Sadhana, and obtain help, guidance and inspiration from Swamiji himself through correspondence and personal contact.

LIBERAL VIEWS

Sri Swami Sivananda permits people to use his name and helps them in establishing centres of spiritual activity. He has no objection even if people run such centres for amassing wealth in his name and for their own name and fame. We all, in the beginning, entertained the apprehension that the Head Office could not efficiently function and make progress, if Sri Swamiji pursued such a policy. Contrary to our doubts, we clearly see now the rapid progress and the world-wide popularity the Society has attained, because of such liberal views of Swamiji. He has, in a short period, brought about a change in the hearts of the selfish people and converted them as selfless, dynamic aspirants and their centres as ideal means for spreading divine knowledge, far and wide.

EVOLUTION FOR ALL

When Sri Swami Sivananda admits people into the Ashram, who have no useful qualification and who are of a negative type, we are apt to feel that the institution might earn a bad name and the spiritual progress of other sincere aspirants would be affected. In an Ashram we generally want Mahatmas

and people of virtuous qualities. Sri Swamiji, however, has his own ways, and is in the habit of lavishly loving the undeserving more and more. The miracle is that in a short period we find a complete transformation in such persons. The presence of undeserving individuals in the Ashram opens our eyes, indirectly helps our own evolution and gives us the opportunity to adjust and adapt ourselves to all circumstances. We are taught to see only the good in others, to try to see the Lord in all beings, and to have a balanced state of mind in all conditions, as per the teachings of the Master.

Sri Swamiji has the power to mysteriously transform the lives of those who live in the Ashram, without imposing any discipline, or a systematic schedule of service and Sadhana. He has the tremendous energy and patience to spend all his time, effort and money in carefully attending to the negative type of people for converting them into adepts in any of the lines, and making them useful to the world in some form or other. Thus, though in the early stages many of his actions appeared to be detrimental to the growth of the Society and the fair-name of the Ashram, later on we clearly saw nothing but good on a large-scale to the world and a remarkable progress in everyone who had the good fortune of coming in contact with him.

PRACTICAL EXEMPLAR

Sri Swami Sivananda, as in the last 35 years, even today untiringly carries on his daily routine of Japa, prayers, Mantra-writing, practice of Asana and Pranayama, writing articles on Yoga and philosophy, and constant meditation, along with his strict dietetic regulations, and rest and relaxation. As in the past, he comes out of his Kutir just for an hour or two every morning to meet the devotees, when he

delights in entertaining the guests and joking with them in a childlike manner, while attending to his routine office work. He also spends two hours in the Satsang every night. His visits to the office and the place of Satsang look like huge festive processions, when devotees accompany him from his Kutir and back.

Remaining as a witness, completely indifferent and unattached to people and property, he is always steady in his own Sadhana, even in this advanced age, while silently managing the affairs of the whole Ashram, looking to the minutest detail with great skill and tenacity, and taking special care of the health and the spiritual progress of all those who stay with him. He has a unique capacity to penetrate the hearts of the devotees all over the world, and infuse a new hope and cheer in the lives of

the afflicted and the despondent.

Thus Sri Swami Sivananda has brought about such a remarkable spiritual awakening throughout the world by establishing a powerful organization at Rishikesh, with a wide network of Branches, while not imposing traditional rules or discipline on anyone. Millions of those who have come in touch with Sri Swamiji have derived incalculable spiritual benefit and even material progress in a miraculous manner. They all enjoy inner spiritual strength, clear perception, good health, prosperity, peace and happiness by following his simple lessons. May the seekers of truth, and the afflicted and the depressed continue to come in touch with the Master in an ever-increasing number and look forward to a bright future in the life divine.

SIVANANDA HAS ANSWERED MY PRAYERS

(Sri Sivananda Candida von Harrach, Germany)

Whenever I think what my Gururji Maharaj has done for me, my whole heart overflows with gratefulness and bliss. Not only did he show me the way to a better life, to a more serious aspiration, to a deeper understanding and practice of divine life, but he also cured me from a protracted illness which kept me bedridden for twenty-three years.

His words are kind and mild, sweet and serene, and he has, by and by, induced me to find out, by myself, that how necessary it was for me to be regular in meditation, how I should keep a spiritual diary, and do Mantra writing. He has graciously given me a Mantra and taught me a kind of Sadhana which he thought was good for me and in which I feel now so perfectly happy and thankful.

The three means with which he bestowed so much of grace on me were: (1), his condescending prayers for me and his personal blessings; (2) his very sweet letters, full of love and kindness; and (3) his numerous books which have enlightened me so much through their glorious wisdom.

From my early days I searched for a true guide who would be a shining torch on my path leading to God-realization, and this desire was so strong in me that I never stopped my prayers for its fulfilment. These prayers of mine were rewarded in an unexpectedly blessed way, when I found my Guru, Swami Sivananda, a master of dynamic spirituality, appearing from a transcendental world, as it were, the like of whom I never expected to find, nor did I ever merit.

Dissemination of Knowledge: the Best Homage

(Dr. Chou Hsiang-Kuang, PH.D., Allahabad University)

My most beloved Gurudev, Swami Sivananda, is a great saint, who has realized the Divine in his life. He is far above all sectarian narrowness, and bereft of communalistic tendencies. His mind is frank, free and liberal. His heart is sympathetic and amiable. He is devoted to God and has dedicated his life to the service of humanity. He wishes that everybody should be in tune with the Divine. The spiritual current started by him is a potent antidote to the disease of 'Godlessness' resulting from materialistic education. We are fortunate enough to have Sri Gurudev amidst us. We ought to pay a fitting tribute to him on his birthday.

The relation between the spiritual master and his disciples is generally a personal affair. But the saint, who appears in this world with the specific purpose of helping mankind to attain spiritual heights, in a universal manner, is much above the average Guru. The worship of such a universally-recognized saint is not the worship of an individual human being. Unlike other religious preceptors, Sri Gurudev stands out distinctly with a unique mission incumbent on him by the Divine Will. If we fail to see this, we would be like an owl who cannot see the shining sun, or like a frog who, sitting inside the well, cannot see the vastness of the sky.

BEST CELEBRATION

Now the question is how the birthday of Gurudev is befittingly celebrated? Are we to offer some clothes to him? It is not ideal. Are we to offer some money to him? That, too, is not adequate. Are we to simply do Japa, Kirtan and Bhajan and pray to God to bless him? It is also not the best

way. The best way to celebrate Sri Gurudev's birthday, according to my humble opinion, is to practise and spread far and wide his teachings to mankind. He has written nearly three hundred books on philosophy, religion and ethics. His contribution to the spiritual literature of the world, to the enrichment of the cultural ideals of mankind, to the promotion of individual and general welfare and spiritual evolution, and to the fostering of mutual understanding, amity and world peace, are, indeed, beyond measure.

I think there cannot be any better homage to his glorious services to humanity than by making available afresh all the precious publications he has so far written and many of which need reprinting. It is especially so, since his life's mission is dissemination of spiritual knowledge, which is very dear to him. Here is an example: A few months ago I wrote a book on the *History of Dhyana Buddhism in China* (which was reviewed in the previous issue of this magazine). I requested Gurudev to write a Foreword to this book. At the same time, I did have a doubt whether he would agree to do so, as he does not generally seem to write such Forewords to books written by others.

I was fortunate enough to receive his response to my letter, saying: "My blessings are always with you, more so in a good spiritual cause. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge is always dear to my heart. You may send me a copy of the manuscripts of the book when it is completed." If we do not like to be ungrateful to him, we should try our best to give our full support to this noble cause.

SIX RUNGS

In Buddhism, there are six 'Paramitas' that ferry one beyond the sea of mortality to Nirvana. They are: (1) Dana Paramita, or charity, or giving, including the bestowing of truth on others; (2) Shila Paramita, or observing the commandments; (3) Ksanti Paramita, or patience, even though insulted; (4) Virya Paramita, or zeal and progress; (5) Dhyana Paramita, or meditation; and (6) Prajna Paramita, or wisdom or the power to discern the reality. It is the last that carries one across the sea of the incarnate life to the shores of Nirvana.

Sri Gurudev's literature is full of Prajna or divine wisdom that will free our minds from the dross of matter to acquire spiritual consciousness. As such, his literature has become an invisible treasure for countless aspirants the world over. We

must, therefore, give our hearty support to Gurudev's untiring efforts for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge, and thus show our substantial homage to him. Have you not heard that Gurudev is calling us:

GIVE, GIVE, GIVE;

*Giving is the secret of abundance;
Give for the spiritual good of all.*

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE;

Love to give,

Love ever gives;

*Disseminate spiritual knowledge
For the good of one and all.*

By saying 'Give,' Gurudev is not asking you to part with your wealth for his personal use. If, through your efforts, one of his books are printed and made available to numerous, thirsty spiritual aspirants, you would, indeed, have celebrated his birthday in an ideal manner.

ONE WHO HAS TRANSFORMED MY LIFE

(Sri Dori Haab, Berne, Switzerland)

Out of a full heart I am sending my love and heartiest wishes for the 74th birthday of our wonderful Guru, Swami Sivanda. Since I have taken up the path of Yoga, my friends have changed, and kind and dear persons I have found. I owe these all to my Guru.

Life is becoming richer and fuller every day, and, although no big and extraordinary events are happening to me, I can feel the guidance and presence of this great saint everywhere. He has infused a new outlook in life for me through his wonderful and inspiring books and letters. From his books emanate a wonderful charm, a goodness and purity of heart, which, I am sure, influence all readers.

We, in the West, who are too much

absorbed in materialism and technology, badly need the lofty teachings of Vedanta. And what is most astounding is that we understand our Bible much better and acquire a deeper comprehension of its hidden meaning through the study of the words of Indian sages and prophets. Their tolerance is wonderful. Their faith and contentment have an inspiring power. Their knowledge and logic are a source of wonder to me. How much we have to learn from, and how wonderful it is that we have such a saintly example among us, to be inspired and guided by, in the form of Swami Sivanda!

The love and gratitude of hundreds of his followers and disciples will be with their Guru, not only on the occasion of his birthday, nay, every day.

Religion for Man's Discovering Himself

(Swami Sivananda's Message for the Seventh Anniversary of the All-World 'Parliament' of Religions, which he had convened at Sivanandanagar in April 1953)

Not merely unity of, but, religion itself is the crying need of the hour.

The challenge of materialism has already brought the followers of the various major religions of the world together, in a common endeavour to stem the tide of 'irreligion.' The criticism that religion was the cause of disharmony comes from those who fail to understand the true nature of religion; all they want is that the wholesome restraint imposed by religion on man should be removed for the rule of the jungle to prevail, for their ulterior, material purpose.

ENNOBLING FACTOR

Intelligent men all over the world have discarded such notions. If not wisdom, at least experience, has warned them against neglecting this ancient bond that united the people together—religion. Religion has always ennobled man. Religion has ever inspired him to strive to be a better human being, in fact to be divine. Religion has always exhorted him to love his neighbour as himself, serve the needy and to be pure at heart. It is clear as daylight to know what the result would be if this factor is removed from the life of man.

Religion, therefore, is the need of the hour. The astounding progress that science has made is fast bridging the gulf between religion and science. The elevation of psychology to the status of a science has broken an important barrier; man's own inner self has come to be recognized as a requisite laboratory to establish the truth about himself. Man, who has so long been using external instruments, has begun to use his inner apparatus. Man who has so long sought for answers to all questions in the

external universe has now turned his gaze within himself. For, after all, the power that conquers nature, that unravels the mysteries of the atom, that harnesses the forces of nature—is man's intelligence.

PERCEIVING INTELLIGENCE

Man has begun to analyze his own intelligence! He has begun to use intelligent methods to get at the result. Intelligence itself has to analyze intelligence. The trend is highly encouraging. It brings man nearer the truth; cosmic intelligence (or consciousness, as the philosopher would put it) is the substratum of the entire creation. That intelligence—the supreme intelligence or consciousness—has to be realized and experienced within oneself. This is the goal towards which even science is indirectly marching.

But the instrument to measure the nature of the underlying consciousness has to be fit enough to do so. It is the higher mind that can touch the fringe of reality in the hours of meditation. The gross mind cannot perceive the subtle essence. It would be wrong to deny the existence of the subtle essence just because the gross mind is unable to perceive it. A blunt intelligence, a gross intellect, an impure mind, would be unable to probe the mysteries of the supreme intelligence. The gross mind has to be sharpened by right understanding, by the practice of virtues, and by faith in the ultimate reality, which alone can facilitate its proper use. Give due liberty to the individualized intelligence, by all means, but, let it be a guided liberty. Let the intelligence be based on faith and discrimination.

It is the destiny of all men that each

will ultimately discover himself. Religion, real fundamental religion, has a vital role to play in this process of man's discovery of himself, and thereby promoting universal

good, world peace and brotherhood.

May you all play your rightful part in a world-wide revival of religion. May God bless you all.

CALM AT THE CENTRE OF THE WHIRLWIND

(Sri Florence Barker, Sussex, England)

There are moments when the evils of the world are too much with us, when we have fallen among thieves, when our dearest endeavours are brought to naught by the unthinking and the envious, and the fruits of our arduous labours seem filched away from us by the greedy and the self-regarding, when we are deserted by our imagined disciples, when fancied friends prove false, when we feel besmirched by the world's slow stain.

In such a dark night of the soul of man, the spiritual writings of Swami Sivananda serve to bring back the right perspective. They usher us once again into that calm which lies at the heart of things,

bringing back the peace which passes all understanding. Evil becomes less significant and our flagging forces revive, for "the divine waves electrify, rejuvenate, revivify, energize the cells, tissues, nerves."

We thank Swami Sivananda for reminding us of the potent medicine of spirituality, always to hand, thus enabling us to find quiet in the storms of life, and giving us strength to keep our inner sacred fires burning, so that the glow therefrom may light the spark in others, or, as one of our latest prophets, Vladimir Didintsev, has recently urged, giving us the freedom to carry the light of the sun into the dark places of the earth.

SPIRITUAL FIGHTER FOR FREEDOM AND PEACE

(Sri Heinz Wyhr, Berlin)

A spiritual fighter for freedom, peace and tolerance for all people in the world, Sri Swami Sivananda is at the helm of the Divine Life Society for the realization of these ideals, and he can look back upon the manifestation of all his deeds in the service of humanity with full confidence and satisfaction.

The Society is a spiritual organization which constitutes a meeting-ground for all people who have goodwill in their hearts. Its activities are directed to promote spiritual understanding among the people and their kinship in the vineyard of the blessed Lord.

Swami Sivananda is a saint in this world of unholiness. His name shall be engraved in the history of the twentieth century as a great man who shaped the spiritual thought of the people and promoted peace and religious freedom in the world. His gospel is an enormous stepping-stone for the attainment of a better world, where freedom and peace will reign among all the nations.

One of the greatest living Yogis, he is a patient and understanding teacher of men, who likes to pave their way to the highest wisdom. He is also the teacher of traditional religions, and guides the people of simple religious beliefs.

A Memorable Visit to Sivananda's Ashram

(Sri N. Balasubramaniam, 'Press Trust of India,' New Delhi)

The call to Rishikesh was irresistible. It came to me most unexpectedly, when a friend who has spent a couple of days at the Ashram passed on to me a book of Swamiji entitled *Self-Knowledge*. I was in a cheerless mood when I poured into the book. It not only brought cheer into me but infused a feeling of confidence and hope. Not that I was new to Swamiji's writings. I had read some of his books before and I had also made two casual trips to 'Ananda Kutir.' But this time, I felt the impact of Swamiji's writings much more than before and I had at uncontrollable urge to visit the Ashram to learn more from him. So, immediately I decided to apply for ten days' leave and the next morning I was near the sage at Rishikesh.

ARRIVAL AT THE ASHRAM

To my good luck, when I reached the Ashram at 9.30 a.m. Swamiji, who normally retires to his Kutir by that time (in the summer season), was, on that day, going round the Press to inaugurate a newly-installed cutting machine. (The Ashram has a very up-to-date printing press, besides a well-equipped studio; it is from here that most of Swamiji's books are printed and sent out to innumerable devotees all over the world.) So, I felt myself lucky to have had Swamiji's *darshan* on my very arrival. From then on, things moved for me as ordained. I shifted my luggage to the room of an Ashramite who was to be my guide throughout my stay there. This friend, who had chosen service to Swamiji, in preference to a lucrative job, gave me valuable advice and thus helped to make my stay useful.

Throughout my stay of twelve days at the Ashram I never missed a single oppor-

tunity of being near Swamiji, because in his presence I found a peculiar joy and happiness. The very look of him thrilled me, and in his presence I could also meditate in peace.

ADVICE ON 'JAPA'

On the first day, one of Swamiji's disciples introduced me to him, and I lost no time in asking Swamiji to give his blessings and a rosary. When I repeated my request, he retorted: "Don't be in a hurry, sir, you will get everything from tomato juice to rosary." By that, Swamiji meant that I could get whatever I wanted, and the choice was left to me. The next day morning, while coming to the office, Swamiji greeted me with a smile and asked me whether I did the Gayatri Japa. When I said "Yes," he asked me whether I knew its meaning. Then I told him that I had read a book on Gayatri by Somadeva Sarma. Later on, before presenting me a rosary, Swamiji said that Gayatri and Sri Rama were the same, and that I could do the Japa of Rama-Nama always.

Swamiji's advice on Japa had an electrifying effect on me, and I never lost time in doing the Japa at the Ashram. The atmosphere there was ideally suited for meditation, and one felt the power and influence of Swamiji in everything. There is a 'Bhajan Hall' at the Ashram, where the *Maha Mantra* (*Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare, Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare*) is recited non stop, day and night. The very walls of this Hall vibrate with the power of the Mantra, and an aspirant cannot find a better place on earth to meditate.

The greatness of Swamiji was that he had immense patience to give a kind and

pleasing word to everyone, who invariably approached him with his tale of woe. In fact, every train and bus that ran into Rishikesh brought with them a stream of visitors to the Ashram, and all of them eagerly waited at the office to meet Swamiji. If there is any person in this world who could claim the maximum number of personal contacts with people, it was Swamiji. Persons of Swamiji's eminence, either in the political or spiritual field, would be normally unapproachable to each and everyone. But here is a Jivanmukta who never bothered about his own convenience in providing solace and comfort to innumerable devotees by moving amidst them day in and day out.

EVENING SATSANGA

At times Swamiji stayed till late in the night at the evening Satsanga, singing Bhajans with the devotees. Even if Swamiji could not talk to them individually, they went away with happiness writ large in their faces. The evening Satsanga begins with some inspiring Bhajans and Kirtans, sung by some of Swamiji's disciples, and followed by lectures on spiritual topics. I was also fortunate to hear the voice of Swamiji, in the role of Krishna, in a tape-recorded account of the *Gita* teachings, when this feature was played at the Satsanga on two nights. I felt as if the great epic was re-enacted for my sake. It appeared so realistic that people heard it in pin-drop silence.

On one occasion I heard one of Swamiji's German disciples sing a Tamil song. Her rendering of the song was so natural that Swamiji remarked that in her last birth she should have been born in India. With his subtle humour Swamiji sometimes gave out profound truths. He once asked a visiting professor as to whether he was aware of an incident at where he lived,

when a lady was causing great nuisance and the police could not check her. When the professor blinked Swamiji said that her name was Maya (illusion). After two more such questions Swamiji jokingly told the visitor that he was a Master of Avidya (M.A.). Well, Swamiji meant that for all of us. The climax of the Satsanga is the rendering of Kirtans by Swamiji himself, in which everyone joins. Every word of the Kirtans is full of meaning and makes a deep impression in the minds of the devotees. Mixed with simple instructions, the Kirtans get a peculiar twist in Swamiji's utterance and send everyone into raptures.

He puts the whole essence of Vedanta through such simple words as: "Enquire 'Who am I?' Know the Self and be free." His general advice to the spiritual aspirants is: "Serve, love, give, purify, meditate: eat a little, drink a little, sleep a little; be good, do good, be kind and be compassionate." If only an aspirant could follow all these teachings, he would become a perfect man.

DAILY ROUTINE

The inmates of the Ashram have a regular programme to follow. For those who stay there, the day is expected to begin at 4 a.m., and a cool bath in the Ganga is refreshing in the summer. From there one could go to the Viswanath Mandir, where one could sit before the idol and meditate. The Asana class begins at 5 a.m., and there is a competent instructor to train the aspirant in the various cultural poses. This is followed by a *Gita* class, conducted by a disciple of Swamiji. From there the aspirant goes to the office premises, where Swamiji turns up to see the innumerable correspondence from the devotees from all over the world.

What amazed me was the meticulous way in which Swamiji personally went through all the letters and thus kept

in touch with the devotees. At the same time, the visitors sat around him, and he kept them busy with his remarks and the distribution of Prasad which ranged from coffee to fruits. The afternoon programme starts with the *Yogavasishtha* class at 4 p.m. Swamiji arrives at the evening Satsanga at 8 p.m., and sometimes sits even upto 10 p.m.

At the end of the day's programme silence suddenly seems to descend on the Ashram, as the inmates go to sleep with

the melodious Bhajans still ringing in their ears.

At the conclusion of an eventful stay of twelve days, I left the Ashram with a heavy heart. While I felt happy over the guidance I got from Swamiji, the prospect of my returning back to the daily chores at Delhi oppressed me. But, all the same, I felt a different man with a feeling of supreme confidence to face the future. When I took leave of Swamiji, I prayed for his continued guidance and blessings.

Impressions of My Brief Stay at Rishikesh

(Sri G.V. Naidoo, Pine Town, South Africa)

As I joined the Divine Life Society, I was able to learn much about the service it is rendering to humanity in the spiritual field. The journals and other literature published by the Society are a source of inspiration to Swamiji's devotees all over the world.

After reading some of his books, I wrote to His Holiness and received his letters advising me of the steps I should take for my spiritual upliftment. I felt his influence and knew that I was being drawn closer to him.

When I visited India, I made it my duty to go to the Ashram at Rishikesh to have Darshan of Gurudev, so that I could benefit spiritually by coming into contact with him. Srimati Naidoo and I were fortunate to stay at the Ashram for eleven days and were privileged, along with others, to be in the presence of, and to talk to, this God-realized Guru, every morning. Daily people waited to be admitted to his presence and among them were a number of devotees from Hong Kong.

Some of us, including those who were studying at the Ashram, were asked to speak. Swamiji asked me to tell about the work of the Divine Life Society of South Africa, which I did. He praised the South African DLS for the service it was rendering to the people and spoke in glowing terms of the assistance given to the Ashram at Rishikesh by South Africans. The inspiring message he gave to my country is highly appreciated, and the officials and members of the Society there will do their best to give effect to his advice.

It gave me much pleasure to note the selfless service rendered by the Swamis in the various departments of the Ashram. The sick are treated free of charge at the two Hospitals there. I saw Swami Hridaya-nanda, who is in charge of the Eye Hospital, perform delicate operations. A large number of visitors are housed and fed during their stay at the Ashram. I felt the place uplifted spiritually. I pray that our Gurudev will be with us for many years to come, so that he may continue to shed light on the path that leads us to the Lord.

Ideal of the Guru as Found in Sivananda

(Kala Bhushan N. Srinivasa Rao, Berhampur, Orissa)

I came in contact with His Holiness Swami Sivananda Saraswati through his inspiring teachings and immortal writings which are being broadcast throughout the world. Later, I had his Darshan in his Ashram. I developed a strong fascination to come into closer touch with the Rishi of Rishikesh and wrote the following poems which throw light on my personal experiences with him.

THE PERSONALITY AND VIRTUES OF THE GURU

He is tall and fair,
With broad forehead,
Well-chiselled features,
With a benevolent look
And a bewitching smile
That soothe tormented souls.

Surpassing youth,
Despite advancing age,
With memory keen and ready wit,
Well learned in holy scriptures,
He performs Dhyana with austerity
And imparts knowledge to aspirants.

He communes with devotees,
Clears their doubts, imparts wisdom,
Watches over their progress,
Instructs them,
And shapes their lives to perfection,
With love and benign grace.

Through numberless years,

In vain, I sought for a Guru.
At last I found at Rishikesh
A perfect Charioteer, who leads
Mortals, through weal and woe,
Corrects and moulds them
Through life divine.

Sivananda, a synonym for Atma-Ananda,
Is installed in the shrine of my heart,
Like the deity in the temple,
Placid and immutable,
But guides me when sought for,
And spares no pains
For rousing the dormant spirit,
Attuning it with the Everlasting.

I bow to the Satguru, who opens
The portals to immortality,
Serves humanity, effacing self,
Inculcates Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya;
Let me meditate on his lotus feet,
Night and day, night and day.

MENTAL WORSHIP OF THE DIVINE PRECEPTOR

Oh Emperor of emperors,
Saint among saints,
Let me worship thy lotus feet,
With variegated and scented flowers.
On this auspicious day,

Mentally offered
With faith and devotion,
With serene and pure mind,
The offering acquires psychic energy,
More potent than any mighty power.

Thou hast enunciated that thoughts
Travel with speed faster than light,
And pure thought-waves
Elevate the mind and touch the soul.

So mental worship, through
Thoughts sublime and holy,
Done with sincerity and devotion,
Is real worship to thy lotus feet.

But in deep meditation
Let me also offer choicest

Flowers and fruits,
Nectar-puddings, to thee,
Who sits placid in my heart,
Inspiring me to attain
The Spirit Divine.

Your writings broadcast
That mere worship and prayer,
Done with sincerity and purity of heart,
Are sufficient to liberate
The soul from earthly bondage.

One has to meditate and concentrate
On the eternal Atma
To attain Jivanmukti,
After conquering the mind
And annihilating the ego.

Pray accept my heart-felt prayers,
Sent through thoughts of piety;
They breathe the fervour of my heart,
Kindled through thy Atmic power—
This struggling aspirant,
In the ocean of Samsara,
Who is trying to rise
To spiritual heights.

So let me transmit loving,
Helpful thoughts to my Satguru;
They raise similar thoughts of love
In him and return to me
With redoubled force.

"Thought is a subtle matter;
A spiritual thought brings
On its wake peace and prosperity
To the generator of thought
And towards whom it is directed."

A continuous stream
Of helpful thoughts, mentally offered
To thy holy feet,
Brings love, joy, peace and cheer;
Sweet, profound thoughts,
Offered on this holy day,
Induce high spirits,
Exalted moods and elevation.

Pray bless me with spiritual strength
Will, self-restraint, discrimination,
Dispassion and inner strength,
So that I might realize
The eternal, everlasting, Atmic bliss—
In this short span of life.

ON PAINTING THE PORTRAIT OF GURUDEV

To capture thy expression
And delineate it on canvas
Is a besetting problem
To many an artist of experience.

In painting portraits
The painter has to depict
"The prevailing character
Of his subject, rather than
Its accidental appearance."

Placing thy photo before me,
Rich in tonal value,
I made an onslaught
On thy immortal expression.

Cautious I was in my prayers,
Ardently I prayed for thy grace,
And surrendered myself
Entirely to thy lotus feet,
Shedding out the little ego.

My efforts were rewarded,
And I presented the portrait
To the Divine Life Society;
Then there was an urge
To paint another in flesh-tints
And adorn it in my study,
To illumine the room,
Shedding lustre.

Like Krishna of yore,
Who submitted himself
To be tied to the grinding mortar,
Out of compassion for thy disciple
Thou permitted thyself to be bound
Within the four frames
Of the portrait.

With concentration and devotion
I could capture thy fleeting,
Eternal and blissful expression
On my canvas, with paint and brush.

The different tones and shades,
Which illumine thy face,
I could translate into
Variegated flesh-tints,
And paint the bewitching smile
Which absolves the sinning mortals.

The sparkling eyes,
The broad forehead,
The dimpled cheeks and chin,
The expressive nose,
Have yielded to the painter's brush.

Thy portrait is a riddle
Even to a well-skilled artist;
Every feature of thine
Is studded with spiritual grace;
To miss it is to miss
Thy benign personality.

"Blest be the art that would
Immortalize time's tyrannic claims."
And let my portrait,

With all thy individuality personified,
Inspire faith and devotion,
And help us to attain Divinity.

To me the portrait imparts
Infinite bliss,
Looks into my heart,
Into the depths of consciousness,
Checks bad thoughts,
Leads me to the path of perfection.

It awakens God-consciousness,
Gives indescribable pleasure,
Urges me to be
In tune with Divinity,
And attain Moksha in this very birth.

It says that the span of life is short;
Defer not till tomorrow
What may be done today;
Practise Sadhana,
Control the senses,
Tame the wild horse, the mind,
Curtail worldly thoughts,
Think of God,
And think of thy preceptor—
For God and Guru are one—
And follow in his foot-steps.

On the auspicious day,
Of 8th September,
I pray to the Almighty with devotion,
To shower His choicest blessings
On Guru Maharaj, so that
He may carry out
His Divine Mission of turning humanity
Towards realization of Divinity.

GRACE OF GOD

The grace of God is like a gentle shower that brings life to the perched up land. It is there equally over everyone. Those who hold up the umbrella of their ego or cover themselves with the slabs of disbelief and indolence, are denied its benefic influence.

—Swami Sivananda

Some Fundamentals of Sadhana

(As Stated in the Sayings of Swami Sivananda)

1. Spirituality means transformation of your nature from animal to human and then to divine. This is brought about by Abhyasa, *i.e.*, spiritual practice or Sadhana, and Vairagya, leading to enlightenment.

2. Conscious attempt to merge oneself in the supreme reality is called spiritual Sadhana, which should be the common aim of all, though the process may be different.

3. If you wish to evolve quickly, you must have the right kind of Sadhana. If you are extremely self-reliant, you can select the Sadhana for your daily practice yourself. If you are in doubt, you should get the right kind of Sadhana from a Guru, and practise it with intense faith.

4. Constant Satsanga with the wise and study of the scriptures under a Guru will slowly wipe out the wrong and worldly tendencies.

KEY-NOTE OF LIFE

5. Make intense Sadhana the key-note of your life. Base your life upon the ceaseless remembrance of the divine consciousness and constant feeling of God's presence.

6. Sadhana is at first mechanical, and it is only in the later stages that it becomes a part and parcel of one's life. It appears as a drudgery in the beginning, but later on it imparts joy, peace, strength, courage and freedom.

7. Do not be slack in your Sadhana. It is Sadhana that will help you in the long run. It is the only asset in this life.

8. Be regular in your Sadhana—and attain Self-realization in this very birth.

9. Never mind repeated failures in Sadhana. *Nil desperandum*. Despair not. Do not give up the struggle. Stand up and fight again. Struggle again. You are nearer

success each time. Every failure is a stepping-stone to success. You are sure to succeed in the long run.

SELF-REGENERATION

10. Only when you have purified the heart, controlled the mind, stilled the thoughts and surging emotions, withdrawn the outgoing senses, thinned out the desires, can you behold the glorious Atman.

11. The practical method of realizing one's divine nature is the complete transformation of the base animal instincts, transcending the human foibles and awakening fully the dormant spiritual traits within.

12. This is done through perfect ethical evolution, self-restraint, self-analysis, self-purification, concentration, meditation, practice of selfless service to, and love for, all, and systematic inner culture, through right speech and right conduct. This alone is the pathway to inner unfoldment.

13. Do not complain against bad environments. Create your own mental world wherever you remain and wherever you go. Do not try to run away from unfavourable environments. God has placed you there to make you grow quickly.

14. The world is not a hindrance to your spiritual path. The world is your Guru. The world is a training school.

15. Perfect serenity, cultivation of divine virtues, entertaining holy thoughts, discipline—all these pave the way to success along the path.

16. Right from the very beginning of your Sadhana, you must understand clearly that in true humility, sincere desire to root out gradually pride, egotism and jealousy, earnest introspection to find out your own defects and improve yourself, lies your hope of progress.

17. The nature of the mind is such that it becomes that which it thinks upon intensely. Thus if you think of the defects of others, your mind will be charged with those defects, at least for the time being. He who knows this psychological law, will never indulge in censuring others or in finding faults in the conduct of others. He will only see good in others. That is the way to grow in Sadhana and spirituality.

18. No man is absolutely bad. Everyone has some good trait or other. Develop the 'good-finding' nature.

PRACTICE OF VIRTUES

19. Examine your character. Pick up some distinct defect in it. Find out its opposite—let us say that you suffer from irritability. The opposite of irritability is patience. Meditate on patience regularly every morning for a few minutes, taking one aspect of it—such as its value, its practice under provocation—on different days. Put it into trial.

20. Choose one virtue for every month and keep it before you as an ideal to be achieved. Meditate on it morning and evening just after getting up from bed and just before retiring at night.

21. There is no easy path to salvation except through small improvements, correction, purity, truth and love.

22. If you are established in Ahimsa or non-violence, you will never be harsh, rude, and haughty even for a moment. No thought of evil or of injuring others will ever occur to you, even for a moment. Your heart will be filled with love, kindness and affection.

23. Not to hurt others is not so difficult as not to be hurt by others. You will have to become rock-like. You will have to kill your egotism in *toto*. You will have to develop patience to a maximum degree

if you wish not to be hurt by others.

24. Adapt. Adjust. Accommodate.

25. Bear insult. Bear injury. This is the test of all Sadhana. This is the most important Sadhana.

26. Forgive those who slander or speak ill of you. Do not harm anyone who injures you. If anybody, from aversion, speaks disparagingly of you, greet him courteously, without remembering those disagreeable words.

27. With boldness, manliness and self-reliance, combine humility, softness of speech and behaviour, and self-denial. Be ready to serve others. Put up with provocation without retaliation. Remove all harshness and rudeness from your nature. Courtesy and politeness must become part of your very nature.

28. Speak only measured words. If anyone starts a hot dispute, keep quiet. Identify yourself with the Atman. Atman is the same in all. It can never be hurt or be insulted.

LOOK TO DETAILS

29. Watch your thoughts, words and actions very carefully. Know the power of words and use them cautiously. Respect all. Be kind, cultivate patience, love and humility. Enquire 'Who am I?'

30. He who gives respect, gets it.

31. Be serene and tranquil under all circumstances. Cultivate this virtue, Shama (serenity), again and again, through constant and strenuous endeavour. Serenity is like a rock; waves of irritation may dash on it, but cannot affect it. Meditate daily on the ever-tranquil Atman which is unchanging. You will attain this sublime virtue gradually. The divine light will descend only on a calm mind. An aspirant with a calm mind only can enter into deep medita-

tion. He alone can practise Nishkama or selfless Karma Yoga.

32. Each Sadhaka should bear in mind that divine life is to be lived in small details. If you are divine in small details, you can be divine in big things. Unless you are careful in your day-to-day life and mould it in accordance with your idealism, it cannot bear fruit.

INTROSPECTION

33. Introspect regularly. Practise self-examination for ten minutes before you go to bed. Sit comfortably. Close your eyes. Think of all actions—good and bad—that you did during the course of the day. Think of all the mistakes that you committed consciously or unconsciously. Then resolve to improve yourself and not to commit the old mistakes henceforth.

34. A man, who has no desire for introspection, whose mind has an outgoing tendency, cannot find out his own mistakes. Self-conceit acts as a veil and blurs the mental vision. If an aspirant wants to grow he must admit his defects when they are pointed out by others. He must try his level best to eradicate them and must thank the man who has pointed them out. Then he can grow in spirituality.

35. Do not brood over your past mistakes and failures, as this will only fill your mind with grief, regret and depression. Do not repeat them in future. Be cautious. Just think of the causes which led to your failures, and try to remove them in future. Strengthen yourself with new determination and earnestness. Develop your will-power.

36. Every temptation that is resisted, every evil thought that is curbed, every desire that is subdued, every bitter word that is withheld, every noble aspiration that is developed, every sublime thought that is cultivated—adds to the strengthening of

will-force, good character and attainment of immortality.

THE SUBCONSCIOUS

37. Subconscious life is more powerful than your ordinary life of objective consciousness. Beneath your conscious life there is a very wide region of subconscious life, which modifies and influences your conscious life. Through the practice of Sadhana you can modify, control and influence your subconscious life.

38. The mind is a product of experience. It is the result of past thinking and is modified by present thinking.

39. From experience you get impression; from impression you get desire; from desire you get modification. Then imagination makes the modification into a longing. Ego attaches itself to the longing, and it becomes then a craving. Then you are forced to do action to fulfil the craving. Action gives rise to experience and so the cycle is repeated.

40. The Samskaras or impressions that you create during your Sadhana will be wiped out if you are not careful or vigilant during your activity in the world.

Constantly dwell on these ideas: "The whole world is my body. All bodies are mine. All lives are mine. All pains are mine. All joys are mine!" Jealousy, anger, hatred, egotism—all these will vanish.

REMOVAL OF OBSTACLES

41. All your troubles and miseries are due to your egotism. It is egotism that has constricted you. The cause of your misery does not come from without. Annihilate this egotism. You will enjoy infinite bliss and a life of expansiveness.

42. Free yourself from the base thoughts of the mind, the various useless imaginations. It is the actions of the mind

that are truly termed Karmas. True liberation results from the victory over the mind. Those who have freed themselves from the fluctuations of their minds come into possession of supreme happiness. If the mind be purged of all its impurities, it will become very calm and all the worldly delusions will be soon destroyed.

43. The process of Sadhana embodies an ascent into purity, and into that absolute perfection which is the original state of man. It implies, therefore, the removal of the enveloping impurities, the stilling of the lower impulses, and establishment of a state of perfect balance and harmony.

44. Mastery over mind should be the main object of Sadhana. If you can remain untouched by grief and loss, anger and malice, lust and greed, hatred and jealousy, if you are able to curb egotism and selfishness, if you are not swayed by likes and dislikes, if you have equal vision, a broad heart, and a catholic mind, if you possess a sterling character and good manners under all circumstances, if you value

the need of others above your own, and your mind is ever engaged in the contemplation of His all-pervading presence, then you can assure yourself that you have advanced in the path of Sadhana.

45. Spiritual practices should make you ever cheerful, more concentrated, joyful, balanced, peaceful, contented, blissful, dispassionate, fearless, courageous, compassionate, angerless, egoless, desireless, 'I-less'. Sadhana should give you a rich inner life, introspective, inner vision and an unruffled state of mind under all conditions.

46. Spiritualize all activities. Feel that you are an instrument in the hands of the Lord. Feel that the whole world is a manifestation of the Lord, and that you are serving Him in all names and forms. Dedicate all your actions to Him. Such dedication will prevent you from doing any wrong. Feel: 'I am Thine, all is Thine, Thy will be done.'

[From a compilation by Dr. Lakshmi Mirchandani]

FRUITFUL RENEWAL OF A FORGOTTEN CONTACT

(Sri Shanti Bai, 'alias' Delseanure Fergie, California)

After my moving from New York City to Los Angeles and after having worked in the service of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for forty years, I moved to Banning, in California, through divine guidance.

It was then I felt the longing for contact with a Master of the Far East—India—since I had earlier visited that country and had been to many Ashrams there.

In my meditation, I was clearly reminded of a contact I had made in 1939, in the Himalayas, with an organization called the Divine Life Society. I had then received beautiful magazines from them. After com-

ing to Los Angeles, I came across an old, worn-out magazine of the Divine Life Society, and therein I saw a picture of Swami Sivanandaji, which inspired me very much. Since then I have continued correspondence with him, and I can never tell in full the benefits I have received thereby. As I became better acquainted, I received, in due course, most of the books and magazines of Swami Sivananda, and I know now that he deserves all he is claimed to be by his devoted students. He has been personally an indescribable blessing to me, bestowing light, love and peace, and I can say that I love and adore His Holiness.

Literary Contribution to Enlightenment and Progress

(Sri Myles M.R. Jones, Bermuda, West Indies)

The best things in life are embodied in simplicity—the little things we see and feel about us as we move through the incessant train of existence: the golden bright flower with soft green stem, the birds in their nests singing merrily, the care-free butterfly in joyful disport, and tender blades of grass waving in air, extruding the marvels of life.

The fragrance of his writings and the lilting, soft music that flows from the perfumed pen of Sri Gurudev instructs us with his awesome wisdom, profound knowledge and insight, at once mellow in grandeur and inspiration. Doubtless, the flavour that pervades his books must have found its origin in the Divine Essence, from where its quiet vibrations carry over their melodious strains into printed words.

Doubtless, he has found the art of writing simply and yet with a dynamic force that interpenetrates the being and soul of man. Such qualities of astounding immensity and simplicity are bejewelled in the superlative personality of this world teacher.

I do not write of him as a person whom I have met personally, nor yet in the mysterious halo of a vision, but rather I write of him in consequence of coming into contact with his deeper Self through the pages of his literature, which are a golden medium to understand a little of the nobility of his soul. Sri Gurudev has the power and the poetical influence in his books to lift man a stage higher and experience a kind of conscious awareness of the reality, as though that awareness was more precise than the fleeting objects of the world.

Slowly, as one reads through the pages of Gurudev's writings, one finds oneself gradually being drawn inwards, from the outside world, into a land of flowers and fountains and brooks, of honey and treacle, in the woodlands of everlasting spiritual bliss. Time seems to stand still and lose its continuity in the depths of eternity. All unwholesome impressions and sensations are temporarily forgotten, and one seems to become a purer being, wafted and washed in the commingled ecstasy of scintillating joy and peace, with which the books of Gurudev are charged. All impurities float away like a boat gliding from the dock, and a divine sweetness and effulgence seem to alight upon the soul like sunshine upon grass. His works are a supreme contribution to world happiness and progress.

Would that we, the westerners, were invested with a little more humility to embrace the wisdom and love of Swamiji with greater reverence and devotion. Perhaps it is the mad race for supremacy in the world of matter that is the cause of our inability to conjure up that deeper and instinctive sense of humility. Perchance some day we may attain it.

It is apparent that the establishment of the Divine Life Society has been well rewarded through the propagation of the profound wisdom of the Spirit. It is with no little success that it has established its place in the spiritual history of the world. I wish it continued progress, success and satisfaction in its endeavours for world upliftment.

Now, as the golden wings of Sri Gurudev's birthday celebrations close upon his merciful breast, may he receive the beatitude of the blessings of the Divine.

Dynamic Instrument of the Divine

(Sri K. Subramaniam, Lumut, Malaya)

This world is really, as Saint Thayumanavar and all other saints have experienced, inundated by the bliss of God. Will a merciful Lord, who had given us this world, this body, the soul and all other inexhaustible resources in the form of air, water, fire, vegetation and mineral bounties, intend that we undergo perpetual suffering and conflict, pestilence and ignorance?

Now-a-days it has become a habit to condemn God for all our omissions and commissions. People are habitually so lazy that they want God to do everything for them daily. They condemn Him for having given the body and perpetual suffering. In fact, He is doing everything for us day and night, even when we are sleeping. He is within and without. Ever is He breathing and pulsating for the human sustenance to help us attain all the good we wish to aspire for. If not for Him, we cease to be. He needs nothing; He never ill-treats, or revenges, or punishes, or curses us to eternal suffering and death; it is we who are responsible for our fate.

We suffer, not because of God's ill-treatment, but due to the gross ignorance of our true nature. We think that we are the gross body, the deceitful mind, the wayward senses, and that we have nothing else to do than satisfy our bodily wants and mental cravings.

THE TREASURE WITHIN

In Ceylon, during the Portuguese reign, a colonial officer went into the interior of the country on an official visit. He happened to go to a villager's house. In front of the villager's house was a big stone. The officer scrutinized it very carefully, and asked the villager what stone it was and

how did he get it. The villager replied that he picked it up in a river-bed nearby. The officer said that he liked the stone and he would pay for it if he would sell it to him. The villager, to whom the stone was of no value, was greatly pleased with the request and parted with it for a paltry sum of money. The officer took it home and sold it for a fabulous sum and he became a very rich man. The stone was not a granite. It was a stone which concealed high-carated Ceylonese ruby, worth thousands of rupees.

Similarly, we are ignorant like the villager as to where our wealth lay with which we could become rich. We think that we are no other than the body. We are ignorant of the brilliant ruby that is within us, which cannot be estimated in terms of gold and gems. If we know it and realize it like Sri Swami Sivananda, we would not only find an inestimable wealth beyond human calculation for ourselves but to the whole world.

SPREAD OF DIVINE WISDOM

Swamiji is a crest of perfection. He is unceasingly, undauntedly and mercifully calling all the people of the world like St. Thayumanavar to share the supreme bliss that is hidden behind the impermanent values of the world, and thereby end all our suffering, conflict and the cycle of death and rebirth. His every breath is directed to alleviate human suffering which is due to our spiritual poverty and ignorance of our true nature.

We cannot cross this ocean of birth and death unless we possess the divine wisdom. Swamiji's main theme of his selfless activities is dissemination of spiritual knowledge on a universal scale. No saint in his

missionary work has done as much in the spreading of divine wisdom in such a simple, straightforward and assimilable manner as Swami Sivananda is doing today. He makes the best use of postal, railway and telegraphic services, and tape-recording, photographic, printing and other modern devices for disseminating spiritual, medical, educational, moral and inter-religious wisdom.

He is very liberal in providing books to the aspirants and even others who are not keenly interested in religious studies. He is like a farmer who sows the seeds in season, never caring for the harvest. A farmer may fail to get due returns for his labour, but not a spiritual teacher. A perfect, godly instrument has never failed. History, in fact, is a record of human civilizations towards ultimate perfection.

REALIZATION

Spiritual realization is no man's monopoly. It is a common birthright and is in harmony the world over. The immortal soul is experienced and revealed by Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, and the innumerable other saints.

We do not constantly think of or forget our gross body. In the early morning we do not search for our body, as soon as we get up from bed. It is because we are firmly rooted in our body-idea and in the belief that we will not die, although we witness death now and then. We are not worried about death or postmortal conditions. This is due to our affinity with our gross body and mind, and not with our true, divine nature. If a really transformed union with our spiritual nature takes place, we become superconscious, the state which Sri Swami Sivanandaji has attained by renunciation and austerity.

A perfect saint has no "thinking and forgetting." He has no subjectivity and objectivity. He is Sat-Chit-Ananda (exis-

tence-knowledge-bliss) himself. He is immortal, beyond birth and death. He has no likes and dislikes. He is an embodiment of love, mercy and compassion. His gaze is all-comprehensive. He sees the past, the present and the future. He is free from the delusions of the intellect, the emotional being and the senses. He has no body-consciousness but only God-consciousness. He always works as a divine instrument. He leads those that have advanced in the divine path to perfection by Nirvana Diksha and the beginners by simple precepts. Swami Sivananda is such a God-realized sage.

DYNAMIC INSTRUMENT

He is a dynamic instrument come to fulfil God's mission on earth. He is more of a mother-like type, full of love, who would compassionately toil for their children, ignoring all bodily comforts, mental relaxation and earthly convenience for the good of the youngsters, whether they may be good or bad, rich or poor, sick or healthy, loving or callous.

He is a saint who is engaged in door to door service. He gives 'home-work' to his disciples and members of the Divine Life Society, checks their Sadhana recorded in their spiritual diaries, advises, guides, comforts and encourages them. To him, if a person should say God's name even only once in a year, it is a great thing. Such is his attachment to God's name. He always sends his spiritual vibrations all round the world to help mankind, and also to the departed souls for their peace, progress and blessedness beyond this world of mortals.

In the present Hindu society, unscrupulous tigers in cow's skin seem to thrive on the religious ignorance of the laity and the title of Swami is being exploited and belittled, as the ignorant aspirants fall into many false traps. It is very necessary to

uphold and maintain the purity of one's faith by public opinion and, if necessary, by legal means.

Saint Thayumanavar has enriched and guided me a great deal in my career. It is he who revealed to me Sri Swami Sivanandaji. I make no difference between Saint Thayumanavar and Sri Siva. In fact, I love the saints of all religions alike. I have no religious bias. If one possesses basic religious understanding, he will love all religions alike and will not quarrel on their external differences. In Tamil there is a proverb: "To a mighty soldier even a blade of grass is a mighty sword." Such should be the spirit of a religious person. Rivers of blood had been shed in the name of religion. Swami Sivananda has contributed greatly in the promotion of religious understanding and inter-religious accord. He is of the nature of that proverbial soldier. His outlook is universal and integral to the very core. He sees God everywhere.

SWAMIJI'S INFLUENCE

By coming within the fold of Sri Swamiji's influence, my religious beliefs are strengthened and enhanced, my aspirations heightened and broadened. My material

aptitudes and experiences are giving place to religious aspiration. I sleep soundly, and take less food now and work more than before. I do not while away my time. The name of God comes to my mind easily and even in sleep. I seek no material gains from God. I have become liberal, and my tendency to help others is increasing.

Swamiji's *Autobiography* has impressed me and revealed him a great deal, like that of Mahatma Gandhi. I crave only for his grace and blessings. Now it is my duty to make myself a true and fit instrument for the attainment of the goal of life. May the Lord bless me to be true to Sri Swami Sivanandaji.

It is not very easy to conquer Maya and to eradicate all mundane desires, without very hard spiritual practices and the attendant divine grace. May Swami Sivananda give me that "back-to-the-wall" strength and guidance for a final and decisive victory. Even a failure in a very good cause is no failure. "Lord Murugan, who is formless and with form, neither is and is not, neither light or darkness, is my conscious, inner force and my Guru. Who could know of His greatness, unless He reveals Himself to us?"

MESSAGE THAT HEALS THE BODY, MIND AND SOUL

(Sri Eddie Boon, Java, Indonesia)

Swami Sivanandaji is well known for his message of Yoga which brings healing to the body, mind and soul. As a Guru, I know him to be strong and clever, very wise and compassionate. He has been endowed by God with the gift of curing many incurable diseases, in a miraculous way. It seems that God speaks directly to him. He is, therefore, full of kindness and does dynamic service to the people.

He has founded the Divine Life Society and the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy wholly on humanitarian and philanthropic grounds. He is a born organizer. He renounced wealth and position to devote his life to the service of mankind.

He is a living example to the whole human race. Contact him, and you will be blessed and happy. Let him guide the world, and the world will be saved.

His kindness and understanding towards me personally I can vouch for, and I am in possession of many gifts from his rich store of pearls of wisdom. No amount of mere description will ever reveal the full truth about a Guru like Swami Sivanandaji.

Belief and Deed

(Swami Vedantananda 'alias' Serapia Devi)

Sir C.V. Raman, one of the greatest modern scientists, while inaugurating the sixth Adult Education Conference at Crawford Hall, Bangalore, said in the course of his speech that literacy and education were two different things, that education, as he viewed it, was contact with a noble man, and that even in individual lives the most powerful educational influence was contact with a powerful man, not simply an intellectual, but a great character, who showed the right way of life.

This is a very just observation, and the next best to actually meeting such a personality is getting intimately acquainted with his work and, if possible, with veracious records describing his manner of life. Many, having thus studied the teachings and the lives of great men, were able to choose one or the other hero of their mind or heart as their guide through life. Some have Socrates for a friend, others Voltaire, or Saint John of the Cross, or Sadi, Vivekananda, and so forth.

NEED OF EXAMPLE

The most inspiring influence is exercised by those whose actions confirm their teachings, for the majority of men want a living example to demonstrate to them the applicability of a principle or precept. It is as if they do not trust themselves or have not the time or the patience to give it a trial, but they will be infused with courage when they see somebody else, preferably the originator of that principle, living up to it. Above all, it dashes people's enthusiasm if they find a man preach well but act less well.

Our generation can never be thankful enough for having been blessed with a sage, who is more than a sage, a saint—Swami Sivanadna. He does as he says. He speaks

of the importance of love and all his actions spring from the love of humanity. He compassionately loves man, theoretically and practically. Dwelling on this point will help us to see very clearly the main difference between a thinker who acts thus, and another, also a great philosopher, for example, who also thought and wrote about pity, Arthur Schopenhauer, the first great western philosopher to be influenced by Hindu thought. He was a pessimist *par excellence*. Sivananda, having seen very much of the world, could not have too many illusions about the ordinary run of men either, but believes in their capacity for attaining perfection. He judged that they deserved compassion and help, which he actually extends to them.

MUTUAL GOOD

Schopenhauer distrusted and disliked mankind. There was incompatibility between him who was bitter and sceptic, and his blithe, light-hearted mother. They quarrelled and parted. This, it is thought, may have furnished the seeds of his distrust of all womankind. Of love, he has not much good to say. However, he believed that the highest form of love is compassion. He believed in an underlying unity, and thought that it was our faulty vision which broke the single reality into illusory differences of space, time and individuality, and that to provide for and help another being was, metaphysically speaking, the same as to do good to oneself.

Already, at an early age, he was impressed with the vanity and the multitudinous sufferings of existence. But the good was to him rather negative. As he viewed it, it was merely the easing of the positive burden of evil. Many are moved by mankind's sufferings and endeavour to assuage

them; so it was in the case of the Buddha; so in Professor Roux's case; so in Sivananda's and in the case of many others. The effect of the realization of the world's unhappiness and evil can be different in different men.

Exalting pity, which is the psychological spring of morality, as the purest form of love, Schopenhauer said that to relieve the distress of others was to give alleviation to that of one's own; that every well-ordered state, with its system of laws preventing people from injuring each other and encroaching on each other's property, was based on enlightened selfishness, but that morality bided man do more than merely refrain from injuring others; it bided him to help them.

FEELING ALONE IS NOT ALL

Strange to relate that one who believed thus and so very keenly felt the agonies of mankind, never took the least interest in the efforts to alleviate them. "All love is sympathy," said Schopenhauer, and quoting the Vedic formula *Tattwamasi* or "That thou art"—a truth which with reference to action could not be better expressed—he added that whoever was able to say this to himself with regard to every being with whom he came in contact, with clear knowledge and inward conviction, was certain of all virtues and blessedness and was well on the direct way to salvation. Yet, was he in his dealings with others either generous or magnanimous? He did not love and was not lovable.

It is the essayist's painful duty to remind or acquaint the reader with the fact that the great philosopher once threw an old woman down the stairs—an action which entailed his having to pay her a life-long pension, as she became an invalid due to the fall, and that, when he heard she had died, he did not waste one thought of pity or regret over her but made a Latin pun on the event. He indulged in scurrilous attacks

on philosopher-professors who had displeased him, and he gave vent to very poor opinions about women, not reflecting that men generally meet the type of women they unconsciously desire to meet.

TEACHING PERSONIFIED

How different from Schopenhauer is Sivananda who also exalts sympathy! He is generosity and magnanimity personified; gives practical help to the sick, the poor and the disconsolate; is not subject to fits of temper; bows to his assailant; prays for earth-bound and departed souls; and has regard for women.

Moreover, Sivananda says that the ideal person is a beautiful combination of the 'head, heart and hand.' Schopenhauer was all 'head.' He placed pity on a pinnacle, but in all his actual dealings did not think of bringing her down from that height to assist him. He theorized, commented and commended, but Sivananda exemplified his teachings by his deeds. Although the writing of his works, which fill so many volumes, must have taken and still takes all the time required for such a task, he found and finds sufficient time to translate his ethical prescriptions into actions.

He, who, in his *Upadeshamritam* said that "Tolerance, equanimity, kindness and mercy can be cultivated only by the practice of Karma Yoga," has illustrated this precepts by ceaseless, selfless service to humanity. Schopenhauer exalted compassion; Sivananda exercised it in addition. This is the most striking difference between the philosopher and the philosopher-saint.

[While it is not the policy of this journal to compare a personality at the expense of another, no such intention is indicated in the above article, which is but an objective comparison of the two characters, on a single aspect, stressing the importance of practice above precept, without meaning any disrespect to the famous western philosopher.

—Editor]

One Caste of Humanity

(Sri Myriam Orr, Geneva)

Among the foot-hills of the Himalayas (in India) lives a great Yogi, Swami Sivananda Saraswati. He was born in an illustrious Brahmin family. A strange spectacle surprised me when I arrived at his Ashram. An elderly man of noble bearing, with a face radiating kindness and good nature, barefoot, but dressed in an English overcoat, walked three times round an emaciated poor man whose body was only badly protected by a torn loin cloth against the strong Himalayan mountain air that swept the river-valley. After the circum-bulation was completed, the elderly man prostrated himself before the beggar who trembled with emotion. He then took him to the Ashram's kitchen, had a meal served to him and, together with his guest, ate a little rice. After this, he sang in a ringing voice a Vedic chant about the divinity and brotherhood of man.

In the course of the numerous 'interviews' which the sage granted me, he said:

"I wear this overcoat, which may seem absurd to you in this place, because it has been given to me by a disciple, and because it is cold here in winter. It is not his robes that make the monk.

"The man whom you saw when you arrived here is a Harijan (an 'outcaste'). He came to see me because he felt that he was soon going to die. I saluted him in the ancient, traditional way (as would befit an honoured guest), and asked him to stay here in our hospital. He is very ill. We shall do our best for him. During his sick days he will be surrounded by our love. There is only one caste—the caste of humanity.

"The monks whom you see in this Ashram," continued the sage, "practise meditation and undergo Yogic training. How-

ever, a part of their time is devoted to nursing the sick or to other forms of work. This is called integral Yoga, which is best suited to man in this 'iron age' or Kali-yuga."

The sage remarked: "Untouchability is infamous. Religion has nothing to do with it. It is a (social) aberration, a superstition, of which still many are made victims. It has to be fought by all means and completely uprooted. There is only one caste—the caste of humanity," he repeated.

This opinion is translated into practice by Sage Sivananda, who is a saint with a tender heart, a physician and philosopher, whose light has crossed the borders of India.

I asked him whether he prostrated himself before all the 'untouchables' who came to see him. His answer was that he had no fixed rules regarding this, and commented:

"This man has suffered much. His heart, his whole being, is permeated by rare purity and goodness. He has never done harm to anybody. In every being he sees a spark of the Eternal."

"You know him since a long time, venerable Swamiji?" I asked.

"No. I saw him for the first time when he arrived here, almost at the same moment you came."

"Can you then see the soul and the whole life of the people just as you see their bodies, venerable Swamiji?"

"Everybody can do that, and everybody is going to get that power if one would try," was his modest reply.

[N.B. The above is a part of Sri Myriam Orr's narration, in *La Tribune de Geneve*, of her 'experiences in India.']

Spirit of Duty

(Swami Sivananda's Krishna Janmashtami Message)

The life of Sri Krishna and His immortal Gospel constitute one of the basic foundations of the religious life of this country. A matchless philosopher, statesman, warrior, ruler and inspirer of devotees, His teachings provide the saving grace for all the ills from which man suffers today. On the occasion of Sri Krishna's birth anniversary let us consider a single aspect of His teachings—the sense of duty in man.

"How will it profit me?" asks the modern man, before applying himself to any task. There is an over-emphasis today on privileges. "Bliss of rights" is the order of the day. Man's vision is all the time centered on his little, selfish personality.

Result: each man, while trying to assert his rights, to demand his privileges, and to grab wealth, position and power, comes into conflict with every other man.

In the domestic sphere, in society, in the office, in factories and even in institutions which exist avowedly for the selfless service of man, like hospitals and schools and mutts, the clamour is for self-aggrandizement. There is no harmony because each one is pulling the chariot of society in a different direction, to fulfil one's own selfish ends.

SELFLESS SPIRIT

Selfish spirit is alien to the spiritual culture of India. The heart of spiritual India still throbs with the spirit of selflessness. The pulse of spiritual India still spells out the word 'duty.' The soul of this holy land is radiant with the light of selfless performance of duty for duty's sake. But where is that spirit? Is it still alive?

This concept is as old as our oldest

scriptures. The *Isavasya Upanishad* exhorts man to wish to live for a hundred years, performing his duties. Work done in the right spirit does not bind one to the wheel of transmigration. That spirit has been elaborated in the universal scripture which today claims adherents all over the world and is regarded as the Bible of Indians—the *Bhagavad Gita* of Sri Krishna.

In a very simple and sublime verse, the *Gita* tells man: "Thy privilege it is to work (to do thy duty), not to its fruits; let not the profit be thy motive, nor shall thou remain inactive."

This is the forgotten message. The emphasis must be shifted from privileges or rights to duties or service. If everyone does his duty, then everyone's privileges or rights are assured.

Indeed, even the concept of 'Human Rights' implies this: in order that your neighbour might enjoy his right, you must perform your duty. But this connotation is often overlooked by the idea of demanding the rights by one who runs away with the privileges.

DUTY BEFORE RIGHTS

The emphasis must now be deliberately shifted from rights to duties. This is the central theme of the *Gita* for application in the present day. Students must obey the parents and teachers; it is their duty. Parents and teachers must take a personal interest in moulding the character of the students and prove themselves worthy of reverence and obedience: it is their duty. Workers in offices and factories must do their job honestly and efficiently; it is their

duty. The authorities or the management must have a real and genuine interest in the welfare of the staff or workers and give them incentive by sharing the profit and creating a sense of belonging; it is their duty. Each man caring for the welfare of other men would lessen the chances of conflict, and everyone will, without having to demand, enjoy one's privileges or rights.

This is not a policy. This is not even just a moral code. This is Yoga or the art of living that makes man spiritual.

One who adheres to this doctrine treats every piece of work as a flower he offers at the altar of the omnipresent Divinity. Will you offer a faded flower when you worship God? No. Even so, when you work in this spirit, you will not be indifferent, negligent or half-hearted. You will be highly efficient. Hence the *Gita* characterizes Yoga as "efficiency in the performance of one's duty."

SERVICE AS WORSHIP

"By offering each action as a flower,

man attains the highest goal—perfection." In a thrilling verse the *Gita* says: "By worshipping That (Supreme Being) with every one of man's action, he attains perfection."

Every well-wisher of humanity, every leader who has mankind's well-being at heart, sincerely tries to find the path to perfection. He wants to create a perfect society, in which there will be peace, plenty and prosperity. Here then is the formula, the forgotten message of selfless service, of performing one's duty for duty's sake, of regarding one's actions as flowers in God's worship. Thus would one's daily life itself be transmuted and transformed into divine life.

Do it now, from this very moment. Your own heart will be filled with inexpressible peace and bliss. You will radiate peace and joy. The entire society will reciprocate and make your own life happy and fruitful. If you are sincere, you will get immediate results. This is the best way you can celebrate the Krishna Janmashtami. May His blessings be upon you all.

COMPASSIONATE GUIDE TO LIFE ETERNAL

(Sri Otti Friedman, Johannesburg, South Africa)

Nestled at the foot of the Himalayas, surrounded by trees and the Mother Ganga flowing by, whispering the truths of the East, there is a haven of peace, where all the blessed souls have the good fortune to serve our great, beloved Master, Swami Sivananda, in spreading his teachings throughout the world.

Thousands of others, like myself, have come in contact with him after growing weary of the superficial way of life, and having looked a little deeper for something real. And now with the promise of the Master, once having become a disciple, he will safely guide us across the wilderness of mundane life to rest for ever in peace and bliss in eternal life.

Could anyone be greater than our ever-loving, compassionate Master? Every now and then I pause to think in awe and reverence at the greatness of this Avatar, whose birthday is the holiest day of the year.

Sivananda and His Literature

(Sri Chandulal B. Patel, Gondal, Saurashtra)

"Every drop of the water of the Ganga is charged with the purity of the soul, as every word of the 'Gita' is with the instinct of the fearlessness of the Self."

—Vihari.

Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has kept the whole world aglow with the incessant flow of light divine from his 300 publications on various subjects, which contain, as it were, the quintessence of the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, the *Brahma Sutras*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata*. The spiritual vision reflected in these fountains of knowledge has aptly been described by some as the Gange-tic culture *par excellence*. The simile is verily true, for whatever Gurudev has accomplished is the outcome of his penance at the lap of the Mother Ganga, graciously flowing by Rishikesh.

India, nay the whole world, has been benefited by the spiritual light shed by the publications of Gurudev. As a result, there have come to be established hundreds of Branches of the Divine Life Society in India and abroad.

VERSATILE SAINT

Gurudev is not only a saint but a dynamic preacher as well. He is a versatile doctor. A born Yogin, he is also an expert child psychologist and an educationist. He is the founder of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy. Today he is ushering in a new era, as it were, through his researches in the science of Yoga.

Having seen and known the trends of modern times, he has come to imbibe an all-embracing, ennobling vision without a parallel. He has his own definition of religion. True spirituality, he thinks, lies in the service of human beings and other creatures in this world. As children of the

same Almighty Father, we have to propagate the spirit of true culture, love and service, and achieve thereby common good and universal peace. This being Gurudev's life-motto, he is today revered and worshipped by his disciples, as divinity incarnate.

His biographies reveal that: "He has presented an excellent ideal to the world by practising philosophy in actual life. This will serve as a source of inspiration to all. His dignity and all-round versatility have filled me (the biographer) with a profound sense of veneration for him. He is a beacon-light to me, one who is a wanderer in darkness. A great spiritual teacher, different persons revere him in different aspects, such as a servant of society, an apostle of knowledge, a devout Bhakta, a Karma Yogin, a Mahatma, one who is universally respected. He is the prophet of universal religion or the prophet of real religion."

GITA COMMENTATOR

Gurudev's commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* has run into five editions. Added to this are his *Jivanmukta Gita*, *Gita for the Blind*, *Gita for Children*, *Sivananda Gita*, and a great many similar publications. Of these, everybody is especially recommended to study his *Bhagavad Gita*, embody as it does: (1) the greatness of Karma Yoga as outlined in the commentary of Lokamanya Tilak, (2) a deep sense of devotion as portrayed in the commentary of Sridhar. (3) a profound intellectual perception as revealed in that of Sankara, (4) the glow of self-effort as found in that of Sri Satvalekar,

(5) the cry of the distressed as heard in the *Anasakti Yoga* of Mahatma Gandhi, and (6) the literary grandeur of the *Song Celestial* of Edwin Arnold. His 'Gitas' for the blind and the youth are not meant for private reading only. They can well serve as text-books in their respective institutions. His paternal regard for the youth and the blind is best reflected in these books.

One of the preliminary pages of the fifth edition of the *Bhagavad Gita* bears in Gurudev's own handwriting: "*Srimad Bhagavad Gita* is a universal scripture. It is the Eternal Guide of man. It leads him from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, from mortality to Immortality. Study the *Gita*; become immortal; enjoy peace and bliss here and now."

Acknowledging our debt of gratitude to Bhagavan Vyasa for the *Gita*, Sri Gurudev speaks of its use in practical life: To express it in his own words: "The world is under a great debt of gratitude to Sri Vyasa who has presented the 'Celestial Song' to humanity for everyone's daily conduct in life, spiritual uplift and Self-realization. Those who are self-controlled and are endowed with faith alone can reap the full benefit of the *Gita*, which gives the science of the soul."

Besides the *Gita*, Gurudev has published books on the *Ramayana*, the *Upanishads*, on Jesus Christ and His Gospel, as well as on the other religions of the world. Through these, he has kindled in the entire world the flame of one, universal religion—the religion of accomplishing the welfare of all souls by cultivating unity through love for, and service of, all creatures.

Vyasa, Valmiki and other mighty sages have immortalized themselves by their marvellous literary works. In the same way, Gurudev will shine for ever as a star in the spiritual firmament of the world through

his noble and eminent publications. He reveals himself in the following words in his 'Epistolary Autobiography', incorporated in *Sivananda Upanishad*:

HE REVEALS HIMSELF

"I am full of mirth, which provide instruction. Through it, I spread knowledge and delight. I accord respect to all. I am the first to bow to all. I devote myself to Japa and meditation all the while, even when walking. There is sympathy in my heart and generosity in my veins. The feeling of compassion, natural in me, always flows unrestricted. Tolerant by nature, I am above enmity and prejudice. If anybody does wrong unto me, I do good to him. When anybody inflicts injury on me, I render service to him with earnestness and pleasure."

"The Ganges has nourished me. She has afforded me many facilities. She has also enlightened me by teaching many truths of the *Upanishads*. My routine of life is just like that of Bhagawan Buddha. Dwelling in a cottage, I pass my time in Japa, meditation and prayer. I also devote myself to the study of the holy scriptures and write books thereon. I talk less but think more. Meditating, I engage myself in work and service to others. The *Gita*, the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavata*, the *Yogasishtha* and the *Vivekachudamani* are my constant companions."

"I practise Yoga and instruct others to do so. I also practise non-violence, truth and celibacy. I respect all saintly persons, religious preachers, different sects and creeds, with no prejudice for any. I love and serve all. I mix with all, seeing in them God's manifestation. Mentally I bow to all creatures, animate and inanimate, asses and dogs, trees, bricks and stones. I offer prayers for world peace and wish good health and tranquillity to all the sick and the distressed. Through Japa and pra-

yers, I seek peace and salvation from God for all the deceased. I take daily bath in the Ganges in the name of those who aim to attain salvation. Wishing good to them, I plunge myself in her holy waters. I always pray to all saints of all religions. I celebrate the anniversaries of sages and saints with deep pleasure. A believer in all religions, I protect and respect them all alike."

SPREAD OF TEACHINGS

The readers will have a clear picture of Gurudev's mind and heart by going through his above-mentioned precious and spontaneous thoughts. Expressed originally in Gurudev's prose, I have tried to render them (elsewhere) in Gujarati verse, with faith and devotion for him, causing no increase or decrease of words. At a blissful moment, I had been fortunate to usher myself into his gracious presence, as a bee does unto the lotus. I had also earned then blessings from him, by reading out to him the above-mentioned versified translation of mine of his epistolary autobiography.

May the Almighty fulfil the noble ideal of the dissemination of knowledge as cherished by Gurudev and the pious wish of his disciples to provide in every house of the Gujarati-speaking people, not only in the newly-constituted State of Gujarat, but also wherever they are, the ennobling spiritual culture that is being propagated by the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy—through Gujarati translations of his English publications. After reading his works I experience the same childlike sentiments as have been expressed by Swami Hridayananda in *Sivananda, the Light of the Himalayas*:

"As Sivananda the immortal sage.
In human form, God I see.
Oh light divine, I salute thee,
The loving God in thee I see!"

'PARLIAMENT' OF RELIGIONS

The efforts of Gurudev to promote universal concord and peace by convening a conference of the representatives of the major religions of the world at Rishikesh, will for ever be cherished in religious history. The *Commemoration Volume* of this World 'Parliament' of Religions, covering 620 crown-quarto pages and published by Gurudev, deserves careful study even by good scholars. Prayers of the different world religions are briefly given at the beginning of this volume, which represent the essence of the beliefs of Hinduism, Judaism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, etc. Giving a self-explanatory exposition of the fundamental principles of all religions, these prayers have as their crest the 'Universal Prayer' of Gurudev, which forms the very soul of the book. On religion he enjoins:

"Religion unites people's hearts. No true followers of any religion will ever condemn other religions. He will, on the contrary, promote goodwill and understanding, peace and harmony.

"We are living in a new world. We are living in the Atomic age. A change of heart is inevitable. The strongest bond of love must unite the hearts of all.

"Intellect should yield place to heart; practice should take precedence over theory."

In plain words Gurudev terms his religion as the "religion of the heart," or the religion of "Divine Life," which, according to him, "is not the cave-dweller's concern, not the monopoly of monks, but is for all."

The *Commemoration Volume* detailing the proceedings of this conference and containing papers on all religions, bears a great spiritual importance for all. As such, all universities, colleges, religious institutions and good libraries should find a copy of this

book. Not only does it contain informative, authoritative and useful details, but it also serves the noble purpose of fostering unity by engendering among the people the spirit of love, peace and tolerance and the basic principles of all religions.

ADEPT IN YOGA

Gurudev has practised the various aspects of Yoga in his daily life much more than it is ordinarily understood. He has amplified them so well in his writings that his followers could well understand by themselves the principles of these aspects and can attain perfection therein. Disciples from Europe and America have largely benefited themselves through the study of Gurudev's literature and practice of the precepts contained therein, as well as through personal contact with him. Some of them have also renounced the world and are either staying with him at Rishikesh or spreading his teachings in their own countries. Gurudev's books have been translated into many foreign languages and are of immense benefit to the people of numerous countries.

His *Yoga Samhita*, *Yoga Maharnava*, *Adhyatma Yoga*, and *Essence of Yoga*, deserves a special study, inasmuch as they are more or less simplified presentations, in English, of the basic scriptures of our religion, in a natural and intelligible style.

A permanent exhibition, the best of its kind and an idea about which cannot be had without personally and actually seeing it, has been maintained in the Ashram to explain the various aspects of Yoga. The details of the 'Yoga Museum' are given in the book, *Essence of Yoga*. The Ashram has also another place of exhibits, the Regalia, where Gurudev's personal effects,

such as clothes, fountain-pens, spectacles, *Kamandal*, sandals, etc., which were used by him earlier, as also his manuscripts and numerous photographs, depicting his various aspects of life, are kept on view. The Regalia has also a complete set of his printed works.

The science of medicine has also been duly represented in his writings. Health and hygiene are a special subject of interest to him. At first, as a doctor, through the service of the sick and the distressed, he went out in search of the Creator, and ultimately attained the highest realization. But he did not ignore his old interest. The literature published by him on health and medicine is sumptuous. His services to the sick are really genuine and of a high order. Apart from treatment at the allopathic hospital, patients are also treated with herbs and drugs manufactured at the Ashram's Ayurvedic Pharmacy. Gurudev has written a book on the *Practice of Ayurveda*. The literature regularly brought out by him on health and medicine requires a careful study by those who want to learn their salient aspects.

EDUCATIONIST

While Gurudev is an eminent scholar he is also a great educationist. His writings on education and training of the youth deserve due attention by all teachers and students. His works on this subject are of great value to schools, colleges and teachers' training institutes. Quite naturally, he stresses on the need of imparting spiritual education to the youth simultaneously with secular learning. This major works that may be mentioned in this connection are: *Students' Success in Life*, *Sure Ways of Success in Life and God-realization*, *Ethical Teachings* and *Religious Education*.

As Gurudev thinks, true knowledge is that which enables us to have Self-realization. It is the cultivation of the everlasting principles of morality, right conduct and spiritual character that constitutes real education.

The central theme of Gurudev's writings is spiritual unfoldment of man. People may show their indifference to matters spiritual, yet our efforts to propagate the sacred teachings of Gurudev must on no account slacken. If, through the Almighty's grace, an individual will chance to read

even a part of his ennobling literature, it might well be a turning-point in his life, inspiring in the reader the best of thoughts and feelings. Actuated to practise the principles enunciated therein, he will start aspiring for the noblest ideal of human life, God-realization. This is a logical sequence and fulfilment of the purpose of the mission of Gurudev, viz., dissemination of spiritual knowledge. Lucky, indeed, are the persons who are on the path of such divine aspiration, led by Gurudev, living according to his teachings, and progressing towards the goal of life.

MAGNANIMOUS SERVICE IN FOSTERING UNITY

(Sri George Veaudry, Montreal, Canada)

Once again we have the opportunity of celebrating Swami Sivananda's birthday, and this year we are exceptionally fortunate in celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the Divine Life Society, of which Swami Sivananda is the Founder-President. My praise cannot be too high for those who have helped in spreading wonderful spiritual teachings to all mankind, irrespective of race, colour or creed. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all those selfless workers of whom Swamiji is the leader.

The little magazine, *Wisdom-Light*, and the books of the Divine Life Society, which I receive every month, have been a source of great enlightenment to me and, I am sure, to thousands of others, too.

The Divine Life Society is performing a magnanimous work in uniting all religions, and leading us from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light and from death to immortality. May we see the Way and become one with Swami Sivananda

Maharaj who has attained the oneness of existence. We of this physical world, who are still in the clutches of time and space, are celebrating Swamiji's 74th birthday. We need have no worry for his future. He was, he is, and always will be. He is beyond space and time, for there is only the eternal presence as the Swami teaches us.

Time is a mental creation. One takes into account time, when one identifies oneself with the physical, astral and mental bodies. In these bodies there is movement, and as soon as an object or subject is moved there is past, present and future. Swamiji's teachings show us the way of rising above the limitations of the body, mind and senses, and after we have realized the identity of our individual souls with the one, eternal, cosmic Soul, when we no longer have our separate entities in the supreme consciousness, we enter a fourth state or dimension, where time does not exist. That is our goal.

Let Us Be Worthy of Our Guru

(Swami Omkarananda 'alias' Mrs. Hanna Herrmann, Switzerland)

On this happiest of happy days, I should like to lay the whole world's joy and gratitude at the feet of my dearest Master, and all our hearts and minds as well. It cannot be put in words what his life of love and service, what the Divine Presence in a human frame, means to countless people on this earth. They are numerous, because he has a message to the world, and a directive, an encouragement, a hope, a realizable aim, for every aspirant, every sincere seeker after Truth, besides the divine blessing in the form of Guru Kripa (grace of the preceptor).

My master strikes the note of liberation from earthly fetters by unselfish service for the Karma Yogi; the ruling and distinguishing note of Pranic direction, physical endurance, equilibrium, strength and psychic capacities for the Hatha Yogi; the note of the pious, devotional, pure heart for the Bhakta; the clear, unmistakable note of self-discipline and mastery over mind for the Raja Yogi; and the sublime realization of the one Truth of truths, for the Jnana Yogi or the Vedantin.

Only the Paramatmic, highest consciousness, as realized by Gurudev, embraces all that is, and has, thus, the "Word, Sound, Colour and Line" for every being, stretching out towards the Light Divine. Of course, we are not stereotyped as to the basic Yoga ways, each of us harbouring also tendencies of one or more of the other lines of accomplishment. That is why he advocates the Yoga of Synthesis. Still, the dominant trend in us will give the fundamentally leading direction always.

One of the most precious gems of his "jewel-chest," is the "Universal Prayer."

Is it not the appeal, the *maximum bonum*, suiting all Yoga ways, and addressing it self to all devotees and disciples in all evolutionary stages?

We pray: "Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms. Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms. Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever." Do not these three perspectives contain the whole teaching and wisdom and realization of the *Gita* and the *Upanishads*?

When, by means of intense devotion, self-knowledge, a pure life and service, the three sentences of the prayer become a constant experience and part of our practical life, we attain the goal: perfect, absolute God-consciousness. Then the mind, with its material aspects and worldly attachments, is burnt by the fire of the Spirit; then duality, with its contrasts, counterparts, deceits and hindering barriers, could no longer exist.

We all are moving in the direction of this wonderful aim, the only aim worth striving for and living for, knowing that only Self-realization can establish peace and lasting happiness, and signify the redeeming love and power for all those who are still fighting and suffering on the lower planes of earthly illusion, dependence, change and misery. But, our revered, dearest Swamiji knows that there is a great difference between an aspirant striving hard to learn and advance by means of prayer, holy texts, a virtuous life and congenial company, and us, his disciples, who are fortunate to receive the direct, immediate grace and guidance of a living Master. I hope that all of us would realize the magnitude of this blessing

Our kind, loving Master gave a grand, illuminating answer when asked by an inquirer if he had actually seen God! "I only see Him," was his emphatic reply. This sublime statement, words revealing the highest, holiest illumination, the light of lights, the eternal Presence, ought to be ringing in our ears and resounding in our hearts day and night. If they did produce realization, all our human relations would be sublimated and all our problems and difficulties in life and work solved.

Our dear, venerated Guru, is never lacking in love and kindness in wanting us to reach the glorious state he has attained.

He wishes us to become helpers, peace-makers and blessed-ones, in the name of the one Reality and for the sake of our brothers. May all impediments dissolve on the way to this attainment! We lay at his holy feet our personal wishes and claims, all illusions of Maya, all that infringes upon the glory, compassion, truth and beauty of the Lord, in order that his birthday may be an illustration, confirmation and glorification of his triumphant, marvellous declaration: "I only see God!" May our prayers, Japa, devotion, love and surrender be the sustaining, blessed factors of your earthly existence!

BLESSING THAT IS IN CONTACT WITH GURUDEV

(Sri Denise Horn, Pretoria)

It is remarkable how many people become interested, first in Yoga, and then in the great Sage, Swami Sivananda.

I heard of Yoga through a physio-therapist nurse while in a hospital, nearly crippled with arthritis. This nurse told me that Yoga could do a lot of good in restoring my health but, like all Westerners, I was inclined to scoff, as I, like so many others, was under the impression that Yoga was 'physical feats!'

I had never been a religious person, although I went to the Church at times and believed in God, but there it ended. Then, when medicine could not help, I turned to God, who, I thought lived in the sky.

On the 3rd October, 1958, I was taken to a Divine Life Society meeting. Here I was introduced to a group of thirty people. I was absolutely thunderstruck. I came away dazed. Immediately I found respect for all other religions and began to learn the teachings of Sri Gurudev. In a month I was asked to write to the revered Swamiji in India and tell him about myself.

I did! Now, whenever I am confronted with a problem, I straightaway write to Gurudev and, strangely enough, always the solution is at hand by the next day. His blessings are numerous and my health and mental ills are being removed. Long live this glorious Saint!

This Mahatma is doing a splendid work in teaching spirituality to the world and, although many of us feel that he is a God-man, he himself never claims this status. He serves mankind most generously.

I have not been privileged to read all the glorious books of Swami Sivananda, yet his wonderful literature is a great joy. Any page of any book, whether opened with interest or at leisure, seems to give an immediate answer. Because of his modern way of teaching, Gurudev is bridging the gap between the Christian and the Jew, the Hindu and the Moslem, also the white and the black.

My sincerest wish and prayer are for Gurudev Sivanandaji's health and long life. Om Tat Sat.

Guru Guides the Disciples

TO MAJ.-GEN. A.N. SHARMA

Glorious Immortal Atman,
Om Namo Narayanaya.
Thy kind letter.

The Sivananda Medical Organization (at Dadh in Kangra Valley) is doing really good service to the villagers. Sri Leela (Mrs. Sharma) is contributing her very good services to this grand Yajna.

The reality of God is His existence.

Scripture is the first Guru. Viveka is the second Guru. Satsanga is the third Guru. Preceptor is the fourth Guru.

Moral teachings from a divine personality will have the desired effect.

Thoughts constitute the mind. If all thoughts are annihilated there remains nothing which can be called mind.

Faith is life. No faith, no Jnana.

Know Him in essence. Never miss a day for meditation.

Regularity, tenacity, and fixity are essential for success in Self-realization.

I am conducting prayer for your health, long life, peace and illumination and that of Sri Leela, the patient Yogi.

May Lord bless you, Leela and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,
Sivananda

23.6.1960

TO SRI OM NARAYAN, MADRAS

Glorious Immortal Atman,
Om Namo Narayanaya.
Thy kind letter.

Yes, you can do the (prayers), living on milk and fruit.

God does everything for our good. He knows what is best for us. Be not anxious. Worry not. You have been kind and gene-

rous to everybody. God will protect you and give you peace and strength. Rest peacefully. I am always by your side.

To give happiness to others is virtue, whereby one derives happiness. To give pain to others is vice, whereby one brings sorrow upon oneself.

Goodness leads to godliness.

Kindness and love are the food which sustains the soul. Combine right understanding, discrimination and meditation.

Scale the spirit's steepest height and reach the peak of eternal wisdom, the acme of bliss divine.

The serenity obtained through Sadhana will deepen into unshakable peace amidst troubles and difficulties. I am conducting prayer for your health, long life, peace, prosperity and illumination.

May Lord bless you, family and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,
Sivananda

12.6.1960

TO MRS. E.A., BRUSSELS

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know you had (seen) me on Television, on July 3rd. Ambassador Rauf has written to me that he will send me a draft for Rs 300/-, your generous donation for the birthday (celebration). It is indeed very kind of you. The Ambassador was in Rangoon, Burma. He was in correspondence with me.

I am delighted to hear of the marriage festival of the brother of your King. The School of Nurses will be a very beneficial one. Kindly take up to work in right

earnest. It will be a boon and a blessing to the people. You can give up (doing) Suryanamaskara as there is pain in the spine.

You can translate "Hints on Meditation." It is a very useful booklet.

Be patient. Persevere. Struggle. Strive hard. You will come out victorious in your Sadhana and meditation.

Pure, divine love throws open the portals of God.

Love is power and wisdom. Love is a marvellous divine wine which God distils from His heart and pours into the heart of His devotees.

I am conducting prayer for your health, long life, peace, prosperity and illumination, and also that of your family.

May Lord bless you and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

16.7.1959 Sivananda

TO SRI CHANDRA MELWANNEY, POONA

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

What a magnanimous, generous heart you have! What kindness! Are you an angel or a human being?

I am in due receipt of your cheque for printing *Lord Krishna and His Leelas and Teachings*, and another book, as also for constructing Kutirs. Thanks and gratitude.

Purity of mind, innocence, and freedom from guile and ostentation are necessary for attaining God-realization.

Repeated meditation is required for success in meditation.

Regard God as your soul.

To practise meditation, sit and meditate.

Whenever and wherever the mind attains concentration, you must meditate.

A loving heart makes a youthful body.

Perfect love and tolerance are inseparable. I am conducting prayer for your health, long life, peace, prosperity and illumination.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

10.6.1960 Sivananda

TO DR. K., JORDAN

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

I am keeping good health.

Sri Vattalji was here for some time.

More meditation, more Japa, more prayer, will bring more serenity.

The four means of controlling the mind are (1) Satsanga, (2) renunciation of Vasanas or subtle desires, (3) control of Prana, and (4) Vichara or enquiry of 'Who am I?'

He who drinks deep "Voice of the Himalayas" lives happily in every way. He is ever serene and joyful. He attains immortality and lives in the Eternal.

Dispassion is strength. Dispassion will give wisdom. Dispassion is the key to life eternal. Dispassion will bestow supreme peace.

Never miss meditation even for a day.

Raise the rod of Viveka (discrimination) when the senses hiss. Give not leniency to the mind.

When you come, you can occupy two rooms in the Garden ('Sivananda Tapovanam' at Rishikesh). They are very nice, quite *pakka*.

I am conducting prayer for your health
and that of Srimati K.

May Lord bless you both and all!

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

22.6.1960

TO RAJA TEJENDRA PRATAP

Suratgarh

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Yes, you can bring your father here.
You can come with Sri Rajalakshmi for
Guru Poornima. I have sent Brahmi Am-
laka Oil and Chyavanaprash for the use
of your father. Let him apply the oil to
the head and take cold bath. Let him take
Chyavanaprash with milk, in the morning.

When the mind and senses are no longer
active, when thoughts cease, the Yogi
attains the state of freedom and illumina-
tion, called Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Mental sloth and torpor are harmful
to spiritual progress.

Meditation is not a passive reverie, but
an intense awareness of the Atman or the
supreme Self.

I am conducting prayer for the health
of yourself, father, Rajalakshmi and other
family members.

May Lord bless you and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

17.6.1960

TO SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

Secunderabad

Adorable Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

I have posted all the letters and sent
books to the persons concerned.

You have done tremendous and marvel-
ous work within these two months.

There is a sacred, ever-blissful realm,
which is self-existent, self-contained and
self-luminous, where there is neither earth
nor water, neither space nor time, neither
perception nor hearing, neither hunger nor
thirst, neither sorrow nor pain, neither
birth nor death, neither motion nor rest.

That is the sphere of ineffable divine
glory and splendour which rests in its own
spiritual greatness. It is not nothingness,
but fulness or plenum. That is the su-
preme goal. O Venkatesa! Seek this realm
and rest there peacefully for ever.

With the extinction of cravings and
all desires the effect of Karma becomes also
extinct.

Kindly take abundant rest. Do not
overwork.

I am conducting prayer for your health,
long life, peace and illumination.

May Lord bless you and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

16.6.1960

TO RAJA BHARATSINHJI, LIMBDI

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Your venerable mother had been here.
She has gone to Badri today. She wishes
that you must stay here with me (for some-
time). She will also stay here when you
are here. Therefore kindly visit this place.
Cordial greetings.

Live up to the ideal of truth, love and
purity, and carry the message of our
Rishis and saintly leaders.

The formula for success is D-E-F, which means Determination, Exertion and Faith.

He is certainly liberated who asks for nothing from others, insults none, who is beyond the pairs of the opposites, and who is devoid of desires.

Education should make a man think, meditate, and enquire. A happy life consists in serenity of mind, contentment and meditation.

Face is the index of the mind. Eye is the index of the soul. Eye is the mirror of the soul.

Thoughts tend to reflect themselves. This is the psychological law.

Morality is in relationship with fellow-beings. Spirituality is in relationship with God.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om.

Thy own Atman,

13.5.1960

Sivananda

TO MRS. S.K., JORDAN

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind, touching letter.

The dream experience is very auspicious. The festival in Jerusalem is very interesting. Man is the same throughout the world. Christ's Pada Pooja (worship of the feet) is similar to the Pada Pooja of saints in India.

Swami Krishnanandaji's book is progressing. I shall send you a copy (when it is printed).

One does not gain anything by speaking ill of others. He only injures himself.

Brahman is the *one*, the *whole*, the all-full, the ultimate, behind all appearances. Tat Twam Asi (That thou art)!

We need a sense of unity and oneness in life. This is the way for world peace. Philosophy enlightens religion and religion invigorates philosophy.

There must be integral knowledge, integral culture, integral personality, and an integral experience of the Divine.

I am conducting prayer, Japa and Kir-tan for your health, long life, peace, prosperity and illumination, and that of Pati-dev (husband) and others. May Lord bless you.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

6.5.1960

Sivananda

TO SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

Secunderabad

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

I have sent two letter to the parties—the doctor and the AIR. You have done very good work through God's grace. Afterwards you can tour for three months and visit other (DLS) Branches. I shall send you money for your expenses. Kindly visit universities and colleges. Open new Branches. Conduct Asana classes and common meditation classes. Deliver lectures on Yoga, Vedanta and the Yoga of Synthesis.

Name of God is the treasure of treasures. Science of the Supreme is the greatest science. Dhyana Yoga is the great path.

What is life? Life is life. Life is a divine mystery.

Your main task is to take abundant rest and nutritious food after hard work!

Secret of happiness lies in serving others with Atma Bhava and humility,

Meditation is the path of joy. Discrimination is the eye of wisdom. It is located below the eye of intuition. Pierce the veil of ignorance. Strive and attain the light of lights, the truth transcendental.

Let the Silver Jubilee Committee (of the DLS, Hyderabad) become strong. Kindly print *Letters to Kumudini* at Hyderabad itself.

May Lord bless you and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om.

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

15.5.1960

TO SRI A.K. SINHA, PATNA

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know that your son has been appointed Assistant Administrative Officer. He will shine through the grace of the Lord.

I am conducting prayer for his health, long life, peace, prosperity and illumination, and that of your family.

He who knows the immortal, the eternal, the ungraspable by the senses, the imperishable, never dies.

Through wisdom and penance, the heroes who are stable-minded, pure and passionless, behold the Supreme.

The knowers of Brahman are rooted in truth. They are ever devoted to Yoga. They are beyond anger and suffering. They are self-controlled and are the bridge of righteousness.

May Lord bless you, family and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om.

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

21.5.1960

TO SIVANANDA RAJALAKSHMI

London

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter. It is a touching letter. Kindness and affection breathe in every word.

Have constant awareness of the Divine Presence. This will lead to the transformation of the (individual) soul, making it receptive to all that God has to give it.

Through Yogic discipline the mind, the body and the organ of speech work together harmoniously.

The body of a devotee is thrilled. Tears of joy roll down his cheeks. There are horripilation and choking of throat.

The kingdom of God, acquired through devotion, is the greatest of all treasures.

Life is a voyage to reach the goal, the other shore of fearlessness and immortality.

Just as the flower unfolds itself, so also the heart-centre opens through daily meditation and practice of divine love. Prayer is the mainstay of life. You cannot live even for a moment without prayer.

Love creates. Love unifies. Love transforms. Love redeems. Respect and Pranam to self, Patidev, Engineer Asoka and Dr. Harsh.

May Lord bless you all. I am conducting prayer for the health, peace, long life, prosperity and illumination of thyself, Patidev and children.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om.

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

18.5.1960

TO SRI SABHNANI, COLOMBO

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter, and basket of flowers

which I am receiving regularly.

You can come to this Ashram whenever you get leisure. Many of your relatives are coming here. How is your health and that of your daughter, son-in-law and family (wife)? How is your business? Do lot of good business with God (through) Japa, Kirtan and meditation.

I will tell you a great secret. Within the paddy is rice. Within the rice is God or Para Brahman.

Meditation is the key to perfection. Humility is the touchstone of spirituality. Humility is the mark of devotion. Discrimination is the touchstone of wisdom.

Dwell in God through Japa and prayer. Yoga really means this. The supreme fruit of Yoga is eternal bliss, unmixed with sorrow and pain.

Become a Yogi.

Japa *cum* prayer is the royal path to God-realization. Be regular in Japa and prayer, whatever may be your circumstances or condition. This is the secret of success.

I am conducting prayer and Kirtan for your health, long life, peace, prosperity and illumination, and that of your family. May Lord bless you all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

19.5.1960

Sivananda

TO SRI S., DURBAN

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Gradually the ego will vanish. It takes some time. Humility and selfless service will put a break on the ego and thin it out. It is deep-rooted and assumes various forms. Patience is necessary, to root it out.

Nothing happens by chance. Suffering redeems, strengthens your will and power of endurance. It teaches the individual.

The work of God is beyond your finite mind to understand. Dive deep into the chambers of your heart and meditate. You will find restoration, power, joy, eternal satisfaction and perennial bliss.

No evil can befall you if you take recourse to the recitation of the Lord's name and depend upon His mercy and grace.

Have your foundation on the Lord. Be rooted and grounded in Him. He is the corner-stone of the spiritual edifice.

May Lord bless you and all devotees.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

16.5.1960

TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA, NAGPUR

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know you have become Postmaster-General of the Central Circle. It is all God's grace.

Sri H.P. Massand, Director of Telegraphs, was here.

In the very midst of wealth and luxuries man suffers from an inner void and feels restless.

The objective universe is inadequate and incomplete. There is no fulness here. Self-realization bestows fulness, wisdom and everlasting peace, and liberates man from the cycle of miseries.

Self-realization is the highest purpose of human birth. Life is to be so lived that every thought, every word and every act would lead you nearer and nearer the goal.

Yoga is life well-led, righteously led, with efficiency in action, with a wise and dispassionate outlook, with a spirit of detachment and dedication to spiritual values.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,
Sivananda

31.5.1960

TO SWAMI SAHAJANANDA, DURBAN

Adorable Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter and 500 flowers.

I am conducting prayer for Sri Sewpal and others. Glad to know that the book *Saints and Sages* will come out soon.

The man of wisdom and virtue is the greatest benefactor to the world.

Truth is that knowledge which is never contradicted. Moksha is not only cessation of sorrow and pain but also an attainment of positive bliss.

To transform the world you must transform yourself first.

Meditate on the light of the Supreme, which will illumine you with truth.

To understand the world you must understand yourself first. The world is not separate from you. This body is a three-storied building. Where passion dwells is the ground floor. Where the heart dwells is the second storey. Intellect is in the topmost third storey.

I am thankful to all those devotees who have worked day and night to bring the Divine Life Society in South Africa to such a glorious state. May Lord bless them.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,
Sivananda

4.5.1960

TO RANIS NITYAKUMARI AND
RAJYALAKSHMI

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Bhagawate Vasudevaya.

Thy kind letter.

I am in due receipt of your two big baskets of flowers for printing two books. Thanks and gratitude.

I trust that you both are keeping quite fit and are regular in meditation.

Wisdom without devotion makes one hard-hearted.

Blessed with the wealth of wisdom and devotion you shall ever remain young, vigorous, cheerful and happy.

Purify, meditate. Come and enter the divine chariot of immortal bliss.

Be regular in your prayer. You will then live a full vigorous life. Steep and high is your path of pilgrimage, O Nitya Raj. Exert and ascend. Look not down.

Kindly visit this place during Guru Purnima or 8th September (birthday). Cordial greetings.

Respects and Pranams to you both and Sri Swarna Shamsherji.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,
Sivananda

6.6.1960

TO SWAMI CHIDANANDA
Montreal

Adorable Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know that you met the seekers in San Francisco and Swami Asheshanandaji of the R.K. Mission.

Dr. Kent is a wonderful soul, with devotion, simplicity and aspiration.

He is Swami Narayananda now. He is delivering lectures on Yoga and on his (researches on the study of personality through the colour of the iris). The subject is very interesting.

My health is good. The book *Fourteen Lessons in Raja Yoga* is in the press. Some formats have been printed already.

Kindly take care of your health. Do not overwork. Take abundant rest. Eat well.

Faith is the seed; divine grace is the rain; prayer is the plough; self-surrender is the yoke; worship is the handle; meditation is the ox; devotion is the goal; ploughing is weeding 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'; the harvest is God-realization which removes all sorrows and pains, and bestows peace, joy and eternal satisfaction.

May Lord bless you and all devotees.
Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

27.4.1960

Sivananda

TO SRI N.A. NIKAM, MYSORE

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know that you have become Vice-Chancellor of the Mysore University. It is God's grace.

All difficulties will vanish. You will gain strength and peace. I am conducting prayer, Japa and Kirtan for your health, long life, peace, prosperity, illumination and strength.

Knowledge of the Atman or the Self is the greatest wealth. It is the best property for man.

He who wants to pass from error to truth must realize the Atman, and enjoy peace and bliss in his own Self for ever.

He who knows the Atman goes beyond

sorrow and pain. Lord's name is your armour and strength.

Enquiry. Discovery. Recovery.

Introspection. Integration. Intuition.

May Lord bless you with devotion, wisdom and strength.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

26.4.1960

Sivananda

TO SIVANANDA ELUMALAI, MADRAS

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letters and five hundred flowers for printing *Practice of Bhakti Yoga*. The book is in the press.

You have a large, soft heart. It is easy for God to dwell there. He will feel quite comfortable.

Enthroned Him in your heart and worship Him always.

Complete surrender to God is the foundation of everlasting peace. The superstructure is the bliss of union with the Lord.

Keep yourself calm and unruffled at all times. Be regular in your prayer and meditation. This will give you strength. Gain strength and confidence. Meditate. Immortality is yours. Bliss is yours. Peace is yours.

Serve. Become the servant of all. Lord Krishna and Lord Jesus served the humblest, the lowliest. Service elevates, inspires, transforms and brings the descent of the Lord's grace.

May Lord bless you, family and all.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

29.4.1960

Sivananda

TO SWAMI L., SIVANANDASHRAM

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter and basket of flowers.
Thanks and gratitude.

Your determination is laudable. You have a strong will, indeed. Proceed. March onward, forward. Look not back.

Forgiveness and sweet words make the entire universe your friend.

Culture and humility go together. Simplicity is the mark of the truly great ones.

Forgiveness is divine.

So long as the knowledge of Brahman is not attained, the mind will not be des-

troyed. Conversely, so long as the mind is not destroyed, the knowledge of Brahman will not be attained.

He who, having got all opportunities to attain Self-realization, does not attempt to attain it, is indeed a miserable man.

Make others happy. You will get lasting happiness.

May Lord bless you with health, long life, peace and illumination.

Om Tat Sat.

With regards, Prem and Om,

Thy own Atman,

Sivananda

27.6.1960

HOW SWAMIJI HAS BEEN GUIDING ME

(Sri Susano Ortiz, Puerto Rico)

Swamiji never tires; he never gives up; he is always busy at the spiritual service of humanity—speaking, writing, healing, sending his spiritual vibrations through all means, to the four corners of the globe, for all who care to tune in and follow in his footsteps.

"I will take a special interest in your spiritual progress and guide you," Swamiji wrote to me on December 20, 1954. It was the first time I had directly received his spiritual impact. I had received it before, indirectly, through his book, *Kundalini Yoga*. I bought it from a School of Yoga in the U.S.A. I am always grateful for the chance that placed this book in my hands.

Ever since I received his first letter, I have remained within his divine influence, through letters, books, pamphlets, leaflets, photos, phonogram records, etc.

Swamiji has even graced me with his vision, not in dreams, but actually, through his Yoga Shakti, while I was wide awake, doing my Sadhana. This has happened thrice. Is not this the wonder of wonders?

As a western householder, placed under

unfavourable conditions of work, as director of an institute for juvenile delinquents, my struggle has been an up-hill one. Had it not been for his divine grace, I would have slid back to despair long ago. But Swamiji has kept me always steady at my Sadhana.

Here is the latest letter I received from him, dated July 18, 1960: "Your Sadhana has been steady and regular. Every desire conquered, every temptation curbed at the root, every bad habit got over, every little act of Yoga, takes you nearer the goal. The goal is not far away. It is near at hand. Plod on steadily, boldly. Look not back. No disappointment. No failures. Be ever cheerful. The Lord dwells and watches over you from within your heart. He is the Indweller and Controller of your thoughts and actions. May Lord bless you with good health, long life, peace and prosperity! May the blessings of Brahma Vidya Gurus be ever with you!"

Thus, for nearly six years. Swamiji has been guiding, uplifting and showing me the way to attain the goal, Self-realization.

Awakener for God-Realization

(Sri Assia E. Malkiely, Israel)

There are many in the West who cherish the dream of visiting India. It might be a dream of childhood, or a subconscious idea which predominates the mind and stimulates one towards its fulfilment.

I was one of these dreamers who succeeded in materializing that dream, with the help of the encouraging thoughts that radiated out to me from a guiding spirit, Swami Sivananda.

Some years ago I received a letter from Swamiji, which led to a steady correspondence. When I wrote to him about my dream of visiting India, he answered thus: "God fulfils the sincere yearning of the aspiring soul at the proper time. I am ever beside you and am personally watching over your progress. The Lord's grace will surely descend on you, and you will soon visit India."

This was at a time when a trip to India seemed to me quite impossible. But, lo! Swamiji's grand inspiring spirit made the impossible possible; the opportunity came in that very same year.

Then His Holiness, with his world-embracing generosity, wrote to me: "Kindly visit the Ashram to stay and study Yoga or the art of divine life."

FIRST MEETING

Not having the cash to finance my trip, I turned into practice the theory of non-attachment to material belongings. I sold the only property I had, so as to enable my ardently aspired trip.

Arriving at Sivanandanagar, I happened to alight exactly upon Swamiji, when he was ascending the stairs from his Kutir on the bank of the Ganga on his way to

give morning Darshan. I considered it indeed a blessing to catch the first sight, on my arrival, of Swamiji emerging out, with the Ganga and the Himalayas as a backdrop. It was like a marvellous picture coming into life, with the perceptive vision of the "head and shoulders above."

Before reaching Rishikesh I had a bundle of questions and doubts in my mind, which I wanted to get cleared by Swamiji. So I followed him to the Ashram's office, where he met visitors. There I sat, facing the most unusual frame of a body that holds one of the greatest souls of the day.

Sitting there opposite him, looking at him and observing him, while he was doing a dozen and more types of work at a time, I felt my spiritual thirst getting quenched, as a thirsty wanderer in the desert would feel when he finds, in the midst of the wilderness, a spring of refreshing water. All my doubts were cleared and resolved by themselves, with no need to use words, as I realized that everything was latent within us—all answers to our doubts—and we had only to learn how to unfold them.

PRACTICE OF PRECEPT

Observing Swamiji in his daily activities, one can see how theory is being transformed into solid practice, and how the ultimate bliss is gained by following his exemplary life of radiating love, kindness, compassion and selfless service towards all, and especially to those that need them most.

Through his life, Swamiji explicitly demonstrates how the simplest action of his turns into a symbol of his teaching, while bearing continually in mind the aim and purpose of our life, which is beyond the mere efforts at preserving our body.

Swamiji leads us and shows the way of discrimination to recognize the real from the unreal, of sublimating our activities into dedicated offerings to the Lord, of cultivating divine consciousness, and, towards these, he is persistently awakening us, so that we may attain the goal of life—God-realization.

STREAM OF LIFE

While one stays at the Ashram, one is aware of the constant flow of life there, which corresponds to the incessant murmuring of the ever-flowing Ganga. This powerful and sacred river, which embraces the waters of every brook and fountain within its catchment, in the grand Himalayan ranges, carries the blessings of life to the plains below and distributes them to the soil, plants, animals and human beings, to each according to one's necessity, symbolizing the grace of the Lord to all those

that live around her meandering banks. At Sivanandanagar, nestling at the feet of this river, there is a constant flow of visitors. Thousands come and go, seeking and receiving the blessing and guidance of Swami Sivananda.

In the morning, when Swamiji enters his office, his large table is covered with books and pamphlets. Soon they are distributed to those around him, and are also sent by post to many afar, in distant countries, just to make room for another new wave of books for the same purpose, so that the spiritual grace of life may help to heal and comfort the ailing humanity, and thus the cycle goes on relentlessly.

We have only to pray to the Almighty Lord, to shower upon Swamiji long years of health, so that his divine activity may flow as vitally as the surging waters of the Ganga.

LIVING IDEAL OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION

(Sri Per Winther, Sweden)

"I AM THAT I AM." Wherefrom is this sentence taken? The Indian readers would perhaps answer that it sounds like an Upanishadic or Vedic text. "I am" (Jehovah in the original, Exodus 3, 14), was the name of the Lord as it was revealed to Moses. "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD" (Psalms, 46, 11), is also full of suggestions. It agrees perfectly with Indian philosophy.

Likewise, we could study and ponder on the Bible, trying to find the inner, esoteric meanings. Going through not only the Bible but also through the holy books of the other religions, we would find that—hidden among their symbolism and rituals—their essence is the same. It is just the

means and the methods that differ. The goal is always the same in them all, ultimately.

This is what Swami Sivananda teaches asking us, in our practical life, to live upto the higher ideals of our religion or creed, whatever the name it may have.

The living ideal of our religion, which is ultimately the same, we have in Swamiji. Let us, therefore, watch him attentively and learn from him, through his books and through his daily life at Sivanandashram (where the writer of this article is at present staying). May he have many, many happy returns of this precious day. Long live Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj!

What Shall I Call Thee, Gurudev?

(Sri Swami Narayananda)

Shall I call you Bhishma Pitamaha? Yes; you love Ganga more than your own life. You want to rest in the lap of Mother Ganga always. Therefore, you are pained when anyone proposes a change for you to leave the holy banks of the Ganga.

Your name is Siva, Gangapati. (Lord Siva held the Ganga in His matted-locks, and so is called the "Lord of the Ganga.") You live in the hearts of devotees. You are enthroned in our hearts. Physically seated at Rishikesh you are in the hearts of all.

Shall I call you Jagat Guru (world teacher)? You do not like to be called so. You want to be addressed as simple Swamiji. Further, there is neither "Jagat" (world), nor "Gurudom" (pride of being a Guru) in you.

People call you Bhumandaleswar. This means "lord of the world" (Bhu). But you have transcended the earthly sphere by meditating on the truth, "Aham Brahmasmi" (I am the Reality). You are identical with Parabrahman the supreme cause of all the worlds.

Shall I call you Siva Sakti (the power of Siva)? But in you all Saktis (powers) are present. You mould sinners into pure men. You have changed the lives of countless men and women. Many a sinner you have saved.

Brahma creates this world and individual souls. Vishnu protects them and Siva dissolves them back into their source at the end of the cycle of creation. But you have already realized your identity with the Reality, and you always engage yourself in saving humanity. You are a Paramahansa (a realized soul). What makes you work incessantly? Your supreme love for the poor souls struggling in their earthly existence makes you work for their uplift day and night.

You attract the world to you like Sri Krishna. So shall I call you Sri Krishna? You are a great world teacher like the Lord of the *Bhagavadgita*, as your gospel is as effective and inspiring as Sri Krishna's.

Shall I call you Annapurna (Goddess of nourishment)? Like Annapurna you feed all those who come to you. You give them, not only food and clothing, but the nourishment of knowledge, without asking anything in return. You give everything to your devotees unasked.

Shall I call you Bhaktavatsala, one who loves the devotees? You love all alike. You love not only the devotees but the sinners also. You feed people, who approach you, with the milk of divine wisdom, without caring to know whether they want to possess it or not. Such is your generosity. You give them knowledge unasked. You give them your blessings to all, even though they may deserve or not, ask for them or not.

Shall I call you Sri Rama? Sri Rama killed the evil incarnations of demons to give them liberation. But you only want to kill the ignorance of the people with your famous Mukti-tablets: "Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realize." You do not stop to enquire who the recipient is, whether a Deva or a Rakshasa.

Shall I call you the Buddha? He was an incarnation of mercy. So are you, too. He was the enlightened one. So are you, too. He taught the "middle path." So do you. Like him, you have crossed the boundary of caste, creed and colour.

You are everything to your devotees, and beyond everything, too. Let my readers judge for themselves as to who you are. I arrive at no conclusion and I leave it undecided. Will you enlighten me as to who you are?

Divine Life in Service of Humanity

(Sri Marjorie Avery, San Francisco)

As the latest missiles are rocketed into space and conferences are being held at different places in the world to harangue on disarmament, there dwells a spiritual soul in the holy atmosphere of the Himalayas, whose spirit reaches out into the world in quite a different manner, but with a far more efficacious and permanent result.

Swami Sivananda's services to humanity cannot be summarized in this one short article, since their rays reach forth into too many directions; however, I chose this general, broad title in the hope that I might set forth in clear, concrete terms the basic facts that I feel within my mind and heart, as one of his disciples.

First, Sivananda lives and breathes to turn the mind of man towards one's own divine nature. He knows, as only he can know, that peace cannot exist in the world despite all valient efforts, if the mind of man is not spiritualized, if he does not know his real, divine nature. Hastening the evolutionary unfoldment of man is the only redeeming grace the world can aspire to, for securing permanent peace. Two thousand years of civilization have more than proved that people cannot realize their brotherhood unless they live in their higher Self which is one in all.

Secondly, Sivananda sees and accepts the truth that exists in all the great religions of the world, which means that his great and magnificent mission of the dissemination of spiritual knowledge through his literature can go forth into every country, to be read and practised by people of any faith or creed, while in no manner or

form interfering with the doctrines of anybody's church affiliations. The incantation of the Mantras during the evening Satsanga at his Ashram go forth to bless the peoples of all countries, irrespective of race and creed. This broad, universal blessing emanates from his abode, wherefrom peace is radiated in needed directions, from the depth of his spiritual consciousness.

Thirdly, Swami Sivananda is like a Dionysian cup, overflowing with divine joy. He sits in immutable silence, looking at the gurgling waters of the blessed Ganga, as the listening sky strains itself through its adoring light before him to let him know that his cosmic gaze has helped to bring joy to countless people on earth. His heart is filled with cosmic love for all humanity as he strives for their welfare.

Fourthly, as a close disciple of His Holiness, I wish mankind to heed his clarion call to divine life and turn their minds from the unreal objects of this strife-torn world to spiritual values, thereby realizing for themselves perfect peace and celestial blessing. Then the unhappy soul of man will no longer be a fugitive, enveloped in ignorance. The benediction of supernal bliss would suffuse the mind of him who heeds this clarion call of Sivananda. It rings forth, charged with urgency, trying to pierce the almost impenetrable veil of ignorance that shields man. But it sounds forth with intense magnitude to those that are close to his heart.

May the estuaries of the Swami's dream to save humanity flow into the sea of fulfilment, and may ineffable bliss thus fill his remaining years.



[Above] Swami Sivananda with the President of the Self-realization Fellowship of America, Sister Daya Mata (on Swamiji's left). Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Coanda, of Milwaukee, U.S.A., are on the extreme left, and Brother Kriyananda, of the S.R.F., is on the extreme right (sitting). [Left] Swamiji with a group of Sadhaks from abroad, three of whom are now residing at the Ashram.

SOME OF THE STUDENTS FROM ABROAD WHO ATTENDED



[Back row, from left] Sri T. Nanik (Hong Kong); L. Szymanski (Poland); Swami Atmananda, then Franz von Poncet (South Africa); Joseph Kuettel (U.S.A.); James K. Ansah (Ghana); John Banman (Canada); John Clark (England); Yogi Anand, then Irvin Troja (West Indies); and Rev. James Milroy (Br. E. Africa). [Sitting in chairs, from left] Swami Lalitananda, then Leonora Rego (U.S.A.); Assia Malkiely (Israel); Mrs. Kalyani Daswani, then Elizabeth Leo (Hong Kong); Margarita Roveda (Switzerland); H.H. Swami Sivanandaji; Julia Boldrini (Switzerland); Mrs. Szymanski (Poland); Martha Nett (U.S.A.); and Mary Rhynne (Australia). [Sitting on the floor] Swami Hridayananda and Swami Radhananda, formerly Mrs. Ursula Hellmann (Canada),

Blessed, Divine Mission for the Good of All

(Sri V. Narayana Mallaya, Cochin)

Beloved Gurudev's descent on this earth is truly acclaimed as the fulfilment of the Lord's promise to mankind of His appearance, whenever righteousness needed prop and resuscitation. Gurudev's whole life has been the glorious expression of this one supreme motive—establishment of righteousness in and through the sublime practice of divine life, or a life of goodness and service. Divine life is the life of truth, love and purity, and is the synthesis and essence of all the great religions of the world.

Seldom the history of mankind has seen a supreme benefactor of the world as our beloved Gurudev. His life is a colourful commentary on divine life, with an emphasis on tolerance, unity of religions, brotherhood of man, oneness of creation, and belief in the supreme reality of God.

Gurudev is compassion personified. His love for the spiritual aspirants is simply astounding. The care and patience with which he watches over them and guides them step by step and the joy he feels in their achievement are worthy only of a great world teacher that our Gurudev truly is.

The great virtues of service, sacrifice, love, purity, tolerance, and similar other traits, which are part of his nature and which he cultivated assiduously, are contagious and are found in abundance among the worthiest of his disciples.

It was the burning desire for service in Gurudev that manifested itself in the

form of the Divine Life Society, his chief instrument for carrying out the divine mission. The Society is founded on the eternal principles of Dharma, which in simple words mean: "Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realize." These constitute the Yoga of synthesis, and are vigorously implemented by the various sister institutions of the Society, as well as the numerous branches of the parent body all over the world.

With the help of this great institution our Gurudev is doing the greatest of miracles, of leading people away from the debasing influences of materialism and converting them into spiritually-inspired, noble souls, for their own good and that of all others. Since its inception, the Society is rapidly growing in strength, is attracting vast numbers of seekers into its fold, and is thus fulfilling the sacred wish of the Master, which is but a behest of the Lord—service of His creations.

The whole of mankind is very much indebted to Gurudev for His great service of leading them along the path of blessedness, removing their distress, comforting, guiding and enlightening them. As a token of their gratitude, let all disciples and admirers of Gurudev and the members of the Divine Life Society take a pledge to live the blessed life of truth, love and purity, and wholeheartedly support in the establishment of the rule of divine life or of Sanatana Dharma upon this earth. Let us all express our gratefulness to the Divine Life Society and pray to Gurudev and the Almighty Lord to bless us all.

Inspiring Messages from the Master

(Sri Olive Warner, Durban)

May special blessings of God be received by our revered leader, Swami Sivanandaji, on September 8th and ever after. Surely, "for this (spiritual) cause God gave him birth—to brother all the souls on earth," and it behoves each one of us to make every effort to carry out his teachings.

Let me quote the messages he sent me:

November, 1st, 1955: "Spread the divine knowledge far and wide. Japa, meditation, concentration, study of philosophical works, service to mankind—the sick and the poor—will be the easiest and quickest form of Sadhana."

May 16th, 1956: "It is good to spend some time in seclusion in concentration and meditation. Fill up the mind with divine thoughts and constantly remember the Lord. May you gloriously prosper and bring peace and bliss to the whole world."

July, 1956: "Divine life teaches you the ways and means of attaining perfection in and through your daily life, by maintaining uniform divine thoughts amidst multifarious activities. Spiritual oneness of all humanity is the great lesson that man needs today. Proclaim and broadcast the message: *All indeed is Brahman*. The one blissful Self indwells all beings. Be a lamp unto yourself and be a light unto the world. Enter into silence and feel your oneness with the Lord who dwells in your heart. Forget the body and environments. Enjoy the bliss and peace absolute. More time for Japa and meditation will give you more purity, inner strength and peace. Regular meditation in the morning will give you new strength and the inner life of joy and bliss. Cultivate sublime, divine thoughts in your mind through Japa, prayer, meditation,

selfless service and study of religious books. Bathe in the river of life everlasting."

March, 1960: "Detach the mind from the body. Connect the mind with the soul. Realize God and be ever happy." As you spend your energy in elevating others, the more the divine energy will flow unto you."

These messages from Swami Sivanandaji have come to me as a great inspiration, and I feel more strongly than ever that our energies should be redoubled in broadcasting his messages such as: "The one blissful Self indwells all beings."

Every individual needs to grow in the realization of the spirit; every branch of the Divine Life Society should add new members; every school and educational institution should use every possible facility for training the minds of the youth in the principles of divine life; and every family should become a nursery for nurturing the spiritual life of each one of its members.

While gazing at the portrait of Swami Sivananda during a Satsanga, his face appeared to one among us to come to life and smile back. Though we may not all have such an experience, we can become receptive to his telepathic thought and realize the oneness with all who belong to the God of Love, in whom we live and move and have our being.

Let me quote the words of T.L. Vaswani: "The world's piteous need is of more men and women who, rich in the wealth of renunciation, will wander from place to place with the dream in their eyes of the great unity of races and religions."

May each member of the Divine Life Society, wherever he or she may be, become a bright and shining ray from the heart of the central Source.

The central Light is Love, and Love is God, and we are the rays of His Love. May Swami Sivananda ever have cause to give thanks that the seeds he has sown over the past thirty years are bearing fruit hundredfold.

Perfect Man and Karma Yogi

(Sri S.P. Gidwani, Bombay)

His Holiness Swami Sivananda, who has converted a desolate piece of land into a township near Rishikesh, is a well-known figure; he has spread the knowledge of Indian culture throughout the world, and is, indeed, the greatest spiritual ambassador of India.

His personality and his books remind us of Rama, Krishna and Buddha. Some of us think that the former two were mythological figures. But we cannot obviously say the same about Swami Sivananda. The hidden treasures of India have been made bare by this great personage.

I consider His Holiness a perfect man. His tall stature, his generosity and his love for all humanity are a source of inspiration to all of us. It is only very rarely that Mother India gives birth to such exalted souls who devote their time and energy for the good of the entire world. Instead of being a householder, living the life of a prince, he is living in an ordinary cottage on the bank of the Ganga, which is really not a fit dwelling-place for an eminent person like him. He does not, like so many other Yogis, aspire to reach God only by himself, but serves humanity in various ways, as for example, by restoring eye-sight to thousands of poor patients who flock to the Eye Hospital at his Ashram, where, besides a permanently residing eye-surgeon, many eminent eye doctors of India give

their time and energy to treat the poor free.

I am in love with His Holiness because he is a true Karma Yogi and serves all, without distinction of caste, colour or creed. He has inculcated the spirit of service among his disciples, some of whom are double graduates and are giving their time and energy in serving the poor and the needy. There are thousands of temples in India but they are the properties of the head-priests, whereas the Divine Life Society and its founder, Swami Sivananda, are the property of the public at large.

The Swami does not believe in merely talking about the past glories of India but wants us, Indians, to live in the spirit of our culture. He also celebrates the birth anniversaries of Christ and other prophets, which shows his catholic outlook. His injunctions are: serve, love, be patient, crush the ego, bear injury, adjust and adapt, be balanced in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, hate not anyone, be humble, love those who despise you, do your duty with love and devotion, and work ceaselessly for the welfare of others, without any selfish motive.

I could write pages about Swamiji's great work, since I have lived with him on three occasions at his Ashram, but I know that whatever I write will not give an adequate idea of the greatness of this truly great Indian.

In a Strange Way Appears the Guru

(Sri Ferdinand and Elizabeth Blazek, Czechoslovakia)

"God's ways are mysterious indeed, and His wonders are many." It was in the beginning of the year 1956, when I had an unusual dream, unusual because it was more substantial in experience than a common dream. In this dream someone, whom I did not know, had been standing at my left side and was pointing out to a man standing in front of us. I saw only the back of his head and a little of the right side of his face. He was clad in a white garment and his head was shaven.

A few days later, my wife met an unknown lady at the dentist's. They felt immediately a great attraction for each other. That lady gave to my wife a picture of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and, when my wife showed it to me, I recognized him at once as the man of my dream. We corresponded with Swamiji, my wife and I, and within a few months both of us were accepted by His Holiness as his disciples.

Another year of Swamiji's earthly incarnation has elapsed. A single year in eternity means less than a twinkling of an eye. But what an immense amount of unbounded love, charity, sacrifice and wisdom have flowed from Swamiji to all of us, his children, within this short span of one year! He has, indeed, justified his task of

protecting us, we who have been bequeathed to his care by the Lord.

Through the medium of his divine light and love, he is in communion with us—he is one with us all—and bestows upon us his blessings. Where spiritual understanding is not yet perfect, there the rays of his love and wisdom bestow ennobling instructions through personal inspiration, without regard to distance, as also through books. His bright spirit knows neither space nor time.

Our dear Guru's unbounded love overflows to all those who are longing for light and truth, and he is to them a shining beacon of inspiration, a beacon that will never extinguish. Even where there is not yet the requisite understanding and preparedness, there do help the seeds of his precious teachings that are at first ungerminated in the uncultivated soil and when the season is not due, but surely they do spring up in all liveliness as soon as the ground is ready and at the harvest time that is bound to come.

May God Almighty bestow upon this great Son of Divine Love all that is his due, and give him the power of broadcasting the teachings that redeem and enlighten the world, as long as He wills.

BEAUTIFUL INFLUENCE OF MIGHTY SPIRITUAL GIANT

(Sri J. Hightower, New Mexico, U.S.A.)

Being drawn into contact with a saint like Swami Sivananda has been the most transcendental experience of my entire life. He has put into actual practice the great teachings of the sages, seers and Rishis, that ring out through the age, to bless Mother India and the world at large. The beautiful influence of such a mighty spiritual giant as Swami Sivananda, penetrates to all corners of the earth, revealing the true meaning of Christ-love, and illuminating through profound knowledge and wisdom the minds of those who are ready to receive such a priceless treasure. And who could deny the great need for such an understanding of eternal values in a world distraught by Maya?

How Film Industry Can Help Educate Man

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

Today, it is the screen, together with the press, that plays the largest role in moulding the minds of the masses. The influence of this medium of mass impression is tremendous. It is the film industry which could vastly educate the minds of the people, if it so desired.

And what is education? It is the bed-rock on which individual and national destinies depend. Not only the documentaries, but social films—the cinema being the largest entertaining means in most of the countries—form the most powerful medium of mass education.

Friends of the film world! A very great responsibility lies on your shoulders. You can earn the gratitude of the entire world by discharging that responsibility in a manner befitting the spiritual culture of man, that eternally throbbing impulse of his soul, which seeks its gratification through the senses but cannot do so with satiation, alas.

But, are you discharging this responsibility? I want to be frank with you. I want you to prosper. I want the world to prosper, too. And, remember, that only through the prosperity of the people can your prosperity be always assured. If, blinded by ignorance and avarice, some of you should attempt to build bricks of gold at the cost of the people's moral and spiritual health, the entire industry cannot fail to earn a bad name.

At the same time, I am fully conscious of the fact that in the giant film industries, there are people who, in their education and culture, are well comparable with the highly

refined men and women in the other walks of life. And I know too that, time and again, due to the sincere efforts of these noble minds, film industries have won laurels for their masterly portrayal of art and culture and human values. I am deeply proud of this.

Now is the time to strengthen this healthy aspect. Now is the time to unite the people, to educate the people, to strengthen them, to revitalize them, through the mass medium of the screen. This can be done only through good pictures, pictures that glorify such manly virtues as courage, nobility, chivalry, the spirit of selfless service, mercy, generosity, simplicity, self-sacrifice and unswerving loyalty to the ennobling principles of life.

It is sheer ignorance to imagine that the industry can be built up only by pandering to cheap tastes. You must know that you are the masters of the situation. You can create new tastes, healthy tastes, and, believe me, you will not fail to prosper thereby.

Forget the idea of quick profits. Pour your heart, mind and soul into each picture. Pool the best resources. Produce pictures of quality, symphony and beauty. Impose *your own ban* on all that is cheap, vulgar and ugly.

Treat the human element with utmost consideration. Produce pictures for the upliftment of the character of the people. I am not asking you to be a puritan. Each picture should be a picture of noble idealism, a song of salvation, a faultless flower worthy of being offered at the altar of the people's future.

May God give you the wisdom and the courage to strike new and healthy channels in the service of the people. May you all earn the gratitude of the masses.

[Adapted from a special message conveyed through an actor-producer-director, about whom Swami Sivananda said: "May God bless Sri Prem Nath who, through the

activities of the SAGAR MANDIR ASHRAM, is trying to raise the status and the calibre of the workers in the film industry, by educating them and helping them to spiritualize their daily activities! May God crown his noble efforts with success! May SAGAR MANDIR expand and prosper, bringing happiness to the film workers and glory to the Film Industry!"

Incarnation of the Divine

(Sri Werner Schmickl, Pretoria, South Africa)

Another year has passed again, and once more we celebrate the birthday of our Guruji. Swamiji is to me a very true incarnation of God. His wisdom and love, which boundlessly fill the open heart, transform one into an embodiment of divinity. All we must do is to surrender to him and follow his teachings, and all shall be well.

Remember the words he says: "Little of this, and little of that." We must not run away from things, but stay and face the problems of life. Having our heads in the sky is not good enough. We must have our feet firmly secured on the earth as well, but in such a manner that we live in the world in the best possible way, and are not of the world.

The world is our best teacher. Every action done in the right spirit, gives good experience and leads to the fruition of the final goal, God-realization. Likewise, actions that are being performed all around us, can also give indirect experience through observation.

It is easy to swim down-stream, but to turn around and swim up-stream is a most difficult, task indeed. Spiritual quest

is like swimming up-stream. As we slowly swim up-stream to our original source, we find that the downward worldly current is ready to draw us back to our old position, but we must carry on swimming up always, with renewed strength and vigour.

In our daily Sadhana, there are bound to be hard inward struggles during our periods of darkness, at various intervals. There are always ups and downs, but by praying unceasingly and doing regular Japa, Kirtan, selfless service, study of religious books, Asanas and meditation, we shall eventually enter the threshold of God-realization. Come, let us not delay our spiritual practices, but rather start, if we have not already done, this very moment, for tomorrow may never be.

May Swami Sivanandaji shower his blessings ever abundantly upon all, and may all be blessed with good health, long life, spiritual unfoldment and Kaivalya Moksha. My love, adorations and prostrations unto my Sivanandaji, and may Lord Almighty bless him with good health, for many years to come, for the sake of all mankind. Om Tat Sat, Sivanandarpanamastu.

Basic Religion of Sivananda

(Sri Swami Sadananda)

Religion has various definitions, though ultimately it means "that which enables one to be united with one's original source." The goal is the same, though the paths leading to it might vary. Religious prophets in different ages have given many external shapes to religion (*religio loci*), conditioned by the traditional background of the people, among whom they lived, and also the prevalent need of the day. Albeit religion is primarily a cohesive factor in the fabric of society, "that which holds the community together," it is individually a means for the practical expression of spiritual life.

CONCEPT OF RELIGION

Physical urges, the impulses of the senses, for example, the natural law that dictates the preservation of the body and its perpetuation through the propagation of the species, may be predominant in the physical life of man, but he has also a deep-rooted inner urge which the senses or the objects of the world cannot satisfy, and which can be satiated only in something that is infinite, transcendental, beyond the gamut of mundane propensities. People have given the appellations—God, the ultimate Reality, the Noumenon, the Thing-in-Itself, to the goal of this inner quest. Religions are but basically the various forms of this process of the realization of the ultimate.

Life being matter bound, the human mind being conditioned by material perception, the individual soul being wrapped up in the five sheaths of existence, it is natural that this inner quest has to take into consideration the physical world and man's relationship to it. The scriptures say that to realize the supreme Reality, even the gods, or the higher beings from the astral world,

will have to be born in this world of matter in human form. This world is thus a vast school for the highest realization, or the attainment of the ultimate goal of all life, or reunion with one's original source. Once embodied in a physical form, no one can escape this world. Even if man runs away to a cave in the Himalayas or plunges into the heart of a forest, still the world is with him; for he cannot leave his mind apart, and the *mind is world*.

PRACTICAL RELIGION

Thus the spiritual quest of life is in and through the world. That is why Hindu religion defines Dharma or religion as Duty. God-realization is the highest duty of man. It is not a duty that is apart from the world, though it implies renunciation of worldly attachments and worldliness. It is Dharma or duty in relation to oneself and to others. Dharma also is defined as righteousness or righteous duty, which is an expression of religion.

Swami Sivananda's concept of religion is guided by this fundamental principle. By religious life he means an active life in God, or performance of Dharma. He has a formula that states, in a condensed form, all that can be regarded as one's duty to oneself and also to others. His practical religion is portrayed in his formula: "Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize; be good, do good; be kind, be compassionate; bear insult, bear injury; enquire 'Who am I,' and be free." In the following pages an explanation of this practical concept of universal religion, as taught by Swami Sivananda, is given, which is indeed best suited to the modern man.

In the world we find almost everyone, except the monks and ascetics, devoting

himself or herself to make a living, or to earn wealth. Some do it by fair means; others do it by foul means. Obviously, those who do it by foul means think that they are more intelligent than the simple, honest people whom they can dupe. Some of them succeed and make huge fortunes for themselves and as a consequence exercise power to an extraordinary extent. They are able to intimidate not only the common people but also governments. They have no conception of ethical principles because they consider that success, however obtained, is the goal of life. The majority of the common people distrust them, and although they do not agree with their principles, they act in obedience to them because they feel they cannot otherwise get along.

THE BUSY MEN

Swami Sivananda's formula of duty or personal religion is not for such dishonest people, who are not prepared to learn, but is meant for only those who have an open mind. The formula is for the benefit of those who are prepared to respect ethical values and, if possible, to adopt in their life ethical principles. The formula is in the form of instructions. If they are followed carefully, there is a chance of the people making themselves happy even in this mundane life, in the midst of unhappiness and misery. Among those who are to be benefited by these instructions, we may notice different groups of men and women.

First, we may take notice of those who have to spend most of their time earning a livelihood, or engaging themselves in their respective professions, having very little time to listen to lectures, or read the scriptures, or practise meditation and observe rituals. Let us take the case of a busy lawyer, or doctor, and examine how he has to spend his life. From morning till night, the busy lawyer or doctor will be besieged

by clients or patients, requiring immediate attention, and the service to render them in return for the fees obtained, would involve the occupation of almost the entire time of the lawyer or the doctor. The lawyer returns from the court only to dive into the documents, preparing for the next day's case, reading the briefs given to him by his juniors, arriving at decisions, and going to bed late in the night, only to arise in the morning, early enough to go through the same routine.

EAGERNESS NOT ABSENT

How, then, can he have time to think of God or any matter outside law or legal practice? The doctor, likewise, is to be at the disposal of the patients, whose cases he has to be thinking about, so that he can save their health or even possible death by the administration of the proper medicine, or the performance of the correct surgery. After his work he is literally tired out, for he might have been on his legs from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. continuously, and even when he is resting for an hour, there would be telephone calls to be attended to, which he cannot stop. Night and day he is the slave of his profession, with the only satisfaction that his bank balance goes on increasing. This bank balance however does not enable him to enjoy the leisure that God gives even to the factory workers or field labourers.

Now, how are such people to follow the advice of Swamiji? If you examine their hearts, you will notice that many are as eager as the spiritual aspirants to do something for bringing themselves into contact with a higher objective of life, or leading a life of spiritual idealism, in different degrees. But they are not able to think of anything other than their own work, because of the pressure of routine that is brought to bear upon them, since they are qualified experts in their own line. Now

we must notice that even these people can benefit from the formula of Swamiji's practical religion. That is the object of Swamiji putting all the ethical and spiritual precepts into the form of this small formula, "Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize," which can be practised by all alike.

SERVICE

The doctors or the lawyers could serve their patients or clients with the full consciousness that, without any regard for the fee obtained, they are going to render them the maximum service in the form of legal help or medical attention, which they require. If a lawyer does not take cases which are patently vicious, even though they might perhaps bring him the largest fee, unless he is ready to sell out his own intelligence for propping them up, and if he makes a firm resolve never to be connected with dishonesty of any kind, he will have taken the first step in the matter of serving humanity. Unfortunately, such lawyers are rare, but it is for such lawyers that the advice of 'serve' is given by Swamiji, with particular stress, as also to all such conscientious persons. For conscientiousness is the first step in the practice of religion. In serving the client, if the lawyer obtains from him only as much as the client can pay without undue strain, but, at the same time, if the lawyer gives the best help that he can, that is the second step that he takes in the matter of service.

Similar is the case with all other professions. If man has the desire to rise above his base selfishness, in order to be helpful to others, he has taken a step forward in practical religion. If he does this, he is not only true to his conscience, but also is living in harmony with God's will. He is rendering a service of the right kind, and, in spite of his getting a remuneration for

his service, it is, if not selfless service absolutely, at least near to it. It is only those who have no desire to aspire spiritually, or are ignorant enough to be satisfied with mere ritualistic worship, that complain of the lack of opportunity to serve. Even in one's own house one could practise this practical form of religion through unselfish helpfulness. Of course, Swami Sivananda advocates the performance of the ritualistic forms of religion as well, such as worship in a temple, recitation of God's name, *etc.*, but unless these have a substantial effect in the personal conduct of man, there is very little use of them.

LOVE

Like service Swamiji enjoins the injunction of 'love' to one who is desirous of following the principles of his religion. He means that man must have the feeling that just as he has got attachment to himself and his immediate relations, others also are entitled to have a share of this attachment, not in a physical sense, but as compassion and fellow-feeling, and, therefore, it is his duty to extend the love that he has for himself and his wife and children, to the people with whom he comes into contact; for all life is inter-related. If a man's busy life does not enable him to come into contact with those who are not directly connected with his profession, at least he can cultivate a feeling of compassion or kindness or helpful regard to those that come close to him in his sphere of activities.

Let not the lawyer develop a feeling of envy or jealousy towards another lawyer to whom one of his own clients has taken the case. Let him not feel jealous that the other lawyer is getting much more in the form of remuneration than he himself gets. Here comes the factor of contentment, a religious trait. Let him consider that

everything is the dispensation of God, that what he gets will be enough for him and what another man gets or does not get should not concern him. Usually little minds are filled with malice, envy and jealousy. These must be replaced by the higher emotion of love for everybody.

In life we notice that man is very easily able to love one who does not stand in his way or has no direct contact with him. But if there is someone who happens to occupy a position which he thinks is harmful to himself, that person is not loved, but on the other hand, hated. It is under such circumstances that one should develop the quality, not only of tolerance and rising above jealousy, but also of real, positive love. One should even send loving thoughts to a person who otherwise would be hated. This practice of loving one and all is a very great step in religious life. Swamiji is emphatic about this primary factor. God is love, and unless we love our neighbours, we cannot erase our selfishness and cannot develop such qualities as will bring us nearer to God.

CHARITY

There is an Upanishadic story which is not worthwhile repeating here, but the gist of which is that human beings are naturally averse to giving. They are very fond of taking. Life cannot subsist in the world unless there is both give and take. Swamiji is a great believer in reciprocity, but he also says that give all that you can and take the least. That is the ideal. There are three classes of people. One, those who never give but always take. This is the common type, undeveloped and full of worldly defects. Two, those who take but give in return something. And three, those who give and never take anything at all. It is not necessary to explain which class

is the highest. Naturally, those who do not take anything are nearest to God, but in the world it is so difficult for one to maintain oneself unless something is taken also. That is why the golden rule is to give the most and take the least. That is what Swamiji himself practises.

Now, giving must be either in the form of money or in the form of service, *etc.* But even the poorest man can give. He can pray to God for the relief of other people's sufferings. That is his way of giving when he has nothing else to give. But, even in poverty, he can share a little of what he has with another poor man. You can give your good thoughts, good words and even with a simple gift make other people happy. Though this comes under service, this is done as a separate service. In the case of the busy and well-to-do people, whom we have taken into account, the best they can do is to devote almost all that they obtain over and above their reasonable needs, and that of their family, for charitable purposes.

There is a little story about a very old man planting cocoanut plants. A neighbour asked him if he was expecting to obtain cocoanuts from the plant he was planting, for by the time the tree bore cocoanuts, the old man would have passed away. But the old man replied, "I may have gone, but I have eaten cocoanuts grown from trees that have been planted by others, and, similarly, my tree will yield cocoanuts for those who live to take them." That is the kind of spirit which must dominate the minds of the people who give a little of what they have. Such is the spirit of Swamiji. He always likes to give what he has to others and never hoards anything for himself. That is why others also give him in abundance. But his nature of giving is such that he is never free from monetary

debts, for which he does not worry, for the Lord always gives him.

PURITY, MEDITATION, REALIZATION

Purification consists in one's continuous endeavour to keep the devil at a distance and avoid temptation of selfish benefits at the expense of honesty and truth. Purification of the mind is the preliminary step to be taken before the image or the powers of the Lord can be received in it. As long as the dense vibrations of selfishness and self-love agitate the mind, the rarer vibrations of love, truth and goodness will not be able to make themselves felt. Till love, truth, goodness, have their sway in the mind, God cannot be received in it. Therefore, it is purification, obtained by constant introspection, self-examination, cultivation of virtues and repetition of the Lord's name, which is prescribed as one of the processes of self-development by Swamiji. This is possible even for the busiest of men, because it consists in eliminating, then and there, the evil thought that arises and replacing it by its counterpart.

Meditation is too difficult a practice to succeed in by all; especially the busy man of the world will have the least ability to do effective meditation. The only thing that can be done by him is to remember God as per the concept dear to his heart, and repeat His name mentally. Even as he is casually moving along, he will come across beautiful objects of nature, and if he develops the habit of seeing God's hand in the creation of these, in the discipline and the order that are observable in the universe, that will be a form of divine contemplation. Wherever you look, you find the glory of the Lord. This should not be missed, and if one makes it a habit of seeing this glory every time he is free of other thoughts, he will be really meditating

upon God. Also one could have two sittings of meditation, in the early morning and before retiring to bed, and spend sometime in the remembrance of God in one's own way.

The recognition of the fact that one is only an instrument in the hands of the Lord is the first step in spiritual realization. If the common man develops at least this tendency of recognizing that the whole universe is worked and maintained by a common Father and that one has come into the world for the purpose of doing something which God has already decided to do through oneself, one will have gone through the first step in realization. Higher steps in God-realization may be for more spiritually evolved people. But even the common man can try the above way of negating his ego and making himself an agent of the Lord. Selfless service, unselfish love, charity, purification and meditation are the other steps to God-realization.

GOODNESS, COMPASSION

As told in the beginning, Swami Sivananda's religion consists, not only in self-improvement, but in discharging one's duty to others. Being good is essential before doing good. The only way in which we can feel that we have been born with a purpose in life is by doing good to others. It is not necessary to explain what is good as long as a person has got the ordinary common-sense as not to thrust himself upon others and become a nuisance; he may be expected to find out opportunities to show his goodness to other people through concrete, unassuming evidence. Of course, a little bit of intelligence is needed if he is not to become one of the bores who come out as philanthropists or social workers and thrust themselves upon society, displeasing the people with whom they come in contact and to whom they believe that they are doing good.

Now, the real reason for the dissatisfaction caused by such busy-bodies will be found to be that their intention mostly is to gain some reputation rather than to be useful to the people who must be helped. If such a worthless interference with others is avoided, one can find innumerable ways of doing good. The most effective way is to do good without anybody knowing it and without thinking of having done the good. To do good and to speak of it, will take away half the value of having done the good. To do good and to think of it is taking away one fourth of its value. The man who is desirous of being good cannot but do good, and one who himself is good can do real good to others.

Even the busiest man cannot excuse himself by saying he has no time to do good or be good. A desire to do good springs from a compassionate heart. Kindness or compassion is a mark of the religious man. One cannot practise religion without being compassionate. The Lord shuns the hard-hearted. In relationship with others, kindness and compassion should be the predominant factors. Without these, life is a dreary desert and religion a hypocrisy.

SELF-ENQUIRY

It is difficult for the ordinary man to understand that he is, in reality, the Paramatman, temporarily dwelling in a human body. To understand the nature of the Self one must understand one's personality, one's own mind. Study of oneself would help one to grow in spirituality and ultimately realize the Self. No life is separate. Man is a part of the universe, and, therefore, he is bound to be in harmony with the universe. He should not do anything for the purpose of upsetting the peace of the other people near him, who are also part of the universe like himself. He can have such simple thoughts relating to the ques-

tion of enquiring as to who he is. Self-enquiry would enable one to find out one's defects and potentialities, and act according to the religious law of self-improvement and eventual realization.

Even an ordinary man, who has a feeling that he has done nothing against the dictates of his conscience, nothing in short of which he need be ashamed, enjoys a sense of freedom—the freedom of the conscience. It is the man with guilty conscience that is ever afraid of the consequences of his guilt and of the possibility of somebody harming him, in return, for the harm that he has done. Freedom of the conscience leads to freedom from the bondages of material life, with the composite practice of detachment, non-expectation of the fruits of one's action, by being an instrument of the Lord.

ENDURANCE

"Bear insult, bear injury." These are practical instructions, to keep oneself unagitated by anything that might happen. The question will arise: Whether it will be possible at all for a person to bear insult and forget it when he has been seriously insulted or maliciously denigrated? But there is a practical way which can be adopted for the purpose of bearing insult and injury, which, according to Swamiji, is an important spiritual discipline. Just remember that the person who insults or injures you might have a cause to do so, and thereby, not only he helps you to correct yourself in your future dealings and gain practical wisdom, but also offers you the chance to cultivate a forgiving heart. Forgiveness is divine, a basic religious trait. Balance of mind is the characteristic of one who practises religion. Tit for tat is not the way of religious conduct.

Suppose, a little child of three years throws mud at you when you are walking

along, will you beat him? You will just pass along, if you are a mature man, feeling that the child has done it in ignorance. Develop the same attitude towards those who injure and insult you, because they are ignorant. But do not give them further opportunity for their misbehaviour by conditioning your conduct in a correct way. If you carefully look to the causes for your miseries, you will find that in almost all cases you are largely to blame yourself. Endurance also gives you a chance to practise self-improvement.

CONCLUSION

Thus we find that Swami Sivananda's practical religion enables us to purify our heart by selfless service to the creations of God, ennoble our nature by unselfish love

towards all, and improve ourselves through the other means explained in the foregoing pages. His religion, of which he is a living example, is but a way of life, a life in God, for the realization of God, in and through the world. To him religion is a vital principle, a practical expression of spirituality, that which does not cease merely with ritualism. He has, of course, given numerous forms of Sadhana for the spiritual quest of man, and vastly elaborated the various facets of religious principles in his prolific writings. Basically, however, his concept of practical religion boils down to the simple formula: "Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize; be good, do good; be kind; be compassionate; enquire 'Who am I,' know the Self, and be free."

ARDENT PRAYER WORKS A MIRACLE

(Sri Vishan Dass Wadhwa, New Delhi)

It was in the year 1958. My son, Charan Dass, was appearing for his higher secondary final examination here, in Delhi. After he had written his second paper, he became suddenly bed-ridden with high fever. A relative of mine, who is a medical practitioner and who lives close by, was immediately called to our house. He gave an injection and other medicines to my son, but the temperature rose from 102 to 105 fahrenheit degree at night. My doctor-relative could not have his dinner, as he had to attend on my son frequently.

I was in a fix, and did not know what to do. Seeing that I had no alternative left, I sat down and wept before the portrait of my Gurudev, Swami Sivananda, praying to him from the core of my heart to save my son. It later appeared to me a miracle that

I was then graced with the vision of Swamiji, who seemed to come near my son and bless him. This immediately gave me utmost relief and filled me with peace.

When the morning dawned, to my great joy I found that my son had almost no fever and he seemed to be fairly well. In spite of a strenuous night, he continued to appear for his examination. He might have had a slight fever but he was well enough to answer his examination papers without difficulty. By the grace of Guru Maharaj the boy passed through High School in first division, securing an aggregate of 66 per cent marks. Surely, it was all due to Swamiji's unique blessings. May he protect and guide us all for many more years to come.

Yoga Arc of Swamiji

(Sri Is-Haq Daoud, Miami, Florida)

Swamiji says in his *Commentaries on the Narada Bhakti Sutras*: "We do not know of anyone who has become a saint by reading Shakespeare, Herbert Spencer, Milton, Goldsmith or Shelley, but there are thousands who have adopted a new divine life by studying the *Gita*, the *Upanishads*, the Bible and such other books. Each time these books are studied, they (infuse) a greater power to transform the heart of the reader."

Swamiji's words of spiritual instruction, in his writings, constitute holy texts. His presence on this earth adds holiness to our life. His writings and contact transform our nature, infusing peace and joy, in spite of the travails of worldly existence.

The Divine Life Society is the *alma mater* for imparting the knowledge of Yoga and Vedanta to the entire world. It is an international Correspondence School *par excellence*.

Of what value is Oxford and Cambridge education, scientific and technological researches, professional excellence and political power, without the redeeming grace of divine life? Like the six zeros in a million without the digit one, all material achievements are naught without a corresponding spiritual culture. It is the digit one that gives substance and reality to the figure of one million. So is divine life to all other material aspects of life. Otherwise they all turn into meaningless, worthless zeros, without the sparkle of life, and cohesion which are effected only through the practice of divine life. It is the mission of Sivananda to help its inculcation among the peoples of the world, without any distinction.

I have read, studied and mastered dozens of Swamiji's books and that of other Yogis. I do not care for the numerous books on mundane subjects. In the former there is a soul, a radiant illumination, in each letter of every word, whilst the latter appear like a tangled jargon, a jungle of words.

We are living in a tinder box, full of explosives, which could blow up at any moment by a wrong move by one of the big Powers and turn our earth into a cemetery in space. For such is the colossal power of destruction that science has given man, whose spiritual growth is still very primitive. I admire the zest and courage of Swamiji, who has made it his lot to be a minesweeper and clear the danger of mass destruction through his incessant efforts at the spiritual culture of man.

Once humanity becomes imbued and saturated with Swamiji's thoughts and sentiments, this mental corrosion through fear and material perversion would cease, and the vast powers of science would increasingly be utilized for the benefit of the people.

Swamiji is a noble incarnation, who enjoys unanimous admiration. He is perhaps the world's first saint who does not say that we would be punished in hell for being infidels and for transgressing the laws of the Divine. He holds out hope for all, for betterment. In his Yoga ark, all sentient beings are welcome. He seeks out, preaches and works for the good of every living being.

Noah did not enter the ark until others entered it first. Likewise, Swamiji is not content in reaping the fruits of his realization, but sets about in his great task of

making others, all over the globe, to realize their higher Self. His ark is like a *Vimana* (aerial ship), hovering and cruising around the universe, which will not shut its doors until all have been taken in its glorious sphere of divine life, so that all might be saved from self-destruction. His *Vimana* radiates the aura of non-injury, love and goodness to all sentient beings without exception, so that the lowest forms of life may evolve to the highest.

Like Kriya Baba and Elijah, may he never shed his coat of human form but be with humanity and also with the lower

forms of life, until we all attain the goal of life and live in sainthood as one family of the supreme Entity that reigns over us as our common Father.

My birthday wish to him is: "May your Yoga ark swell with life until no one is left out!" I am looking forward to study at his Yoga-Vedanta Academy, so that I, too, will become a realized soul. Where else in this world could my soul obtain such a covetable award of Self-realization, and without which of what use are the other degrees and title-awards given by the leading universities throughout the earth?

ONE WEEK AT SIVANANDASHRAM

(Sri P.M. Govender, Transvaal, South Africa)

My brother and I were fortunate to go to Rishikesh some months ago, and stay in the sacred company of Swami Sivanandaji for one week. It was a very memorable week, and we were constantly immersed in spiritual ecstasy. We found the torch of truth, love, purity and peace glowing at the Ashram, under the inspiration of Swamiji. He was very generous to let us tape-record more than four thousand feet of the various items of the Ashram's programme, including his divine instructions and devotional songs.

Through the Divine Life Society, our noble Gurudev is doing wonderful service to the world, especially at a time when there is the utmost need for spiritual understanding and peace. We live in an age of suspicion and catastrophies. Surely, by the practice of the teachings of Swamiji we will be able to realize the ideals of world brotherhood, goodwill and common welfare. His teachings have a great unifying force.

Swamiji enquired of our welfare and needs on every day of our stay. We used to be filled with immense joy when his eyes rested on us. With a few words of friendliness and welcome he made us feel at home. Nothing could have made us happier than to listen to his long-cherished words of truth and love. The whole atmosphere of the place radiated with divine compassion. Here thousands of seekers of truth and even ordinary people find rest and peace and are received with unbounded hospitality.

Gurudev's life is an illustration of renunciation, determination and ceaseless endeavour for the spiritual welfare of the world. We are ever grateful to him for what he could work in us within but one week. Filled with peace and happiness, we returned to our country changed persons. Since then the world appears to us changed. Swamiji's every word has become divine to us.

Precepts Through Simple Aphorisms

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

1. Selfless work leads man to Godhead.
2. Service of humanity is dear to the Lord.
3. Pleasure is only pain in disguise.
4. Craving causes intense restlessness.
5. Cultivate virtues.
6. Be obedient.
7. Discipline yourself.
8. Study moral and spiritual texts.
9. Do not indulge in novels and cinemas.
10. Do not backbite.
11. Do not speak harsh or vulgar words.
12. Do not eat non-vegetarian food.
13. Respect saints, teachers and elders.
14. To know a saint is to be a saint.
15. Desire is death, desirelessness is life.
16. Thoughts are the seeds of your bondage.
17. Moderation is the first virtue.
18. In giving you receive.
19. Ignorance is the greatest poverty.
20. The pen of a saint is more powerful than the sword of a soldier.

DO AND DON'T

21. Don't be too friendly with childish persons.
22. Live in this world tactfully.
23. Give up bad company.
24. Do not talk much before great souls.
25. Avoid unnecessary discussions.
26. Purity of food leads to purity of mind.
27. Do not do any action that is harmful to anyone.
28. Life is a mystery and an adventure.

29. To define God is to limit God.
30. Live today well.
31. Lead the life divine.
32. You will have a better life tomorrow.
33. Do not live to die, but die to live.
34. A man without religion is an animal.
35. Fearlessness is the greatest asset of an aspirant.
36. Be like a bee and drink the honey of immortality.
37. Be not like a fly, always after sensual filth.
38. Feel the living presence of God within.
39. Give up egotism, worldliness, desire for objects.
40. When mother delusion is dead, the son wisdom learns to walk.

GODLY LIFE

41. Open your heart to the eternal light.
42. Think less and less of body and food.
43. Think more and more of God.
44. Mind your business.
45. Do not poke your nose into the affairs of others.
46. Have trust in God.
47. This world is full of wonders, but nothing is more wonderful than the mind.
48. See your own mistakes and defects first; then you will not think of the mistakes of others.
49. The highest wealth is one's knowledge of Atma.
50. Discrimination is the cornerstone of spirituality.
51. Man's future is in his own hands.
52. Mercy is the noblest virtue.

- 53. Care not for fruit of action.
- 54. Obeey your conscience.
- 55. Do that which is just, non-inju-
rious.

56. Lust and anger are saturated in
the senses.

- 57. Power is a dangerous deluder.
- 58. Work energetically.
- 59. Act righteously.
- 60. Endure courageously.

REAL AND UNREAL

61. The one Reality can only be form-
less, though its limitations may have name
and form.

62. The world is only reflection of
Brahman.

63. The world is unreal; God alone is
real. Yet world is real till Self-realization.

64. All forms are like reflection
in water.

65. Meditation is to be continued till
knowledge dawns.

66. World is the means through which
you know God.

67. Work is worship.

68. To think "I am the body" is a
falsehood.

69. All creation is only one family.

70. You are the very product of your
thoughts.

71. Without God's will nothing ever
happens.

72. The great problem of human bon-
dage is the freedom of soul from the coil
of ignorance.

73. Love alone can bring peace on this
earth.

74. Unity brings harmony and peace.

75. The way of peace is the way of
truth.

76. Service to the poor is the best
religious practice.

77. Service reduces the ego and ex-
pands the heart.

78. Pain is, indeed, your eye-opener.

79. A little knowledge makes you
puffed up; great knowieuge makes you
humble.

80. Loss of temper is the loss of sense.

LAW OF FREEDOM

81. Strength is the law of freedom.

82. Do not hate anyone, for hatred
never stops hatred.

83. Desirelessness is the seed of im-
mortality.

84. Balance of mind under all condi-
tions is Yoga.

85. Life is a pathway unto divinity.

86. By prayer a sacred link is esta-
blished between the devotee and God.

87. Lust and anger cut at the root of
discrimination.

88. Power must be guided by Dharma
or righteousness.

89. Self-discipline must begin with
the mind first.

90. Eat sparingly; do not live to eat.

91. Concentrate single-mindedly.

92. Behave politely.

93. Presevere patiently.

94. Apply tenaciously.

95. Rejoice wholeheartedly.

96. Stick resolutely.

97. Live truthfully.

98. Talk kindly.

99. "I am the all-pervading Brahman"
is the truth.

100. "All life is my very Self" is the
truth.

101. This truth is realized when you
understand that nothing belongs to you.

102. "I am the silent witness" is the
truth.

103. "This world is absolutely real"
is the negation of truth.

104. Self-realization needs arduous
preparation.

105. Without a firm ethical base spi-
rituality is a void.

GOD AND RELIGION

106. God can be realized through faith, devotion and meditation.

107. God is the only solace in life.

108. Religion is nothing but love for God who is manifest in all.

109. Goodness is the way to true happiness.

110. Compassion is the best of ornaments.

111. Cease to do evil; evil will not chase you.

112. Do not postpone charity and prayer.

113. Awake; nothing is impossible in this world.

114. Arise; shake off Tamasik lethargy and sensual indulgence.

115. Remember that you are only a pilgrim here.

116. This world is a public inn.

117. Beware of self-delusion.

118. Live your life in moderation and restraint.

119. Sensual indulgence brings disease and blunts refinement.

120. Acquisition of wealth increases grossness of mind and heart.

121. Renunciation alone can make you fearless and happy.

122. In renunciation lies your salvation.

123. Dispassion is the gateway to the knowledge of God.

124. Detachment, discrimination, dispassion, absence of ego, and possessionlessness are called renunciation.

125. Selfless service opens the heart, and widens the consciousness.

DEVOTION AND LOVE

126. Bhakti is the sweetest method for approaching God.

127. Desire for God-realization is not

desire but aspiration that does not bind.

128. God's name is the greatest treasure which no one can deprive.

129. Faith is the sweet flower of devotion.

130. Love alone can conquer the heart of others.

131. Love grows by service and by giving.

132. Divine love is far higher than human love which is selfishness.

133. He who knows the glory of God can only be a devotee.

134. Bliss is your own nature.

135. Mind alone is Maya.

136. The higher mind frees you from the lower mind.

137. Intuitive realization breaks down the individuality of the higher mind.

138. Be positive always.

139. Meditation exalts you to God-consciousness.

140. Taste the immortal essence and drink the nectar of immortality through meditation.

141. Non-injury is the supreme law of life.

142. Happiness is in contentment.

143. Life is a sacred gift from God; utilize it well.

144. It is difficult to please everyone; but one can displease all.

145. Co-operation must be your motto.

146. Adversity is an opportunity to develop your will.

147. Failures should be stepping-stones to renewed effort.

148. Your daily tonic should be the recitation of the Lord's name.

149. There is nothing higher than the goodness of heart.

150. Self-denial gives purity of mind and fitness for liberation.

(Compiled by Swami Amarananda)

Glory That Will Never Fade

(*Sri Indrajit Sharma, M.A., Simla*)

The nobility of Swami Sivananda's life and the sublimity of his teachings give me a firm conviction that his influence will last on the horizons of our present-day civilization for a long number of years to come. He has held fast to our age-old values with such a tenacity and interpreted them so well that our own ancient philosophy of life has assumed a new meaning and given us an integrated perspective. Swamiji's name and his life and teachings will occupy a position of honour in spiritual history, and will continue to shine like a beacon-light to the way-farers on the storm-tossed ocean of this mundane life.

Magnificent marvels of architecture crumble to dust; artificial standards of life die a natural death with the passage of time; old systems, theories and philosophies crack and yield place to the new ones. Nothing that is blase, hypocritical and of impermanent value, lives. Truth alone triumphs. Truth alone shines. This is the lesson which history has taught us. If we forget this lesson, we head on to destruction.

It is the life of man or the way he lives that has always moulded the course of human destiny. Earthly glories last till the reunion of dust with the dust, but spiritual glories rise above temporal impermanence and continue to shine eternally. Life is a great gift, and those who well utilize it are truly the children of God. Life wasted in the pursuit of mundane pleasures is like exchanging a diamond with tinsel. Life is so sacred, precious and uncertain that to while away our time in fruitless activities is not only criminal but a tragic waste.

Sivanandaji had all that was necessary for material happiness; yet he left all to

own nothing. Such was his renunciation. When a prince renounces his domain, when a millionaire embraces poverty and leaves his riches for distribution among the down-trodden, when man forsakes everything for the realization of God, it is something worthy of notice. It may not be an exaggeration to remark that Swami Sivananda's renunciation was a natural corollary to his conviction about the imperfection of mundane life. His inner spirit was seized with an immense fervour to traverse the hazardous pathways of spiritual life. He wanted a new light, a new vision, and a new life.

He revived the memory of our ancient ascetics by his severe austerities. A young medico was in search of a panacea for all human miseries and did get this prize by hard quest and deep meditation. Any dispassionate observer may find the working of the divine will through his instrumentality. His life now is a daily miracle of the victory of spirit over body. Though he suffers from various physical discomforts, yet he smiles with a grace and beauty that may put even a blooming youth to shame. This is a great lesson we can learn from the Master. How to make the body one's obedient slave, to follow the dictates of the higher life, is a golden lesson which Swamiji teaches us daily—but only to the discerning.

Swami Sivanandaji is an intensely sincere saint. He has built up an institution for the preservation of the spiritual values of life. He has put it on sure and firm foundations. It will not be a hyperbole if I remark that he has nourished this plant of the Divine Life Society, which has now grown into a big tree, with his own blood, sweat and toil. It behoves all the disciples

and devotees of Swamiji to act in a worthy way and give the credit to their Master of being proud of his spiritual products. All the disciples of Swamiji, especially his re-

nunciate disciples, have a special duty to perform. They should so mould their lives as to serve as exemplars of divine life and ideal torch-bearers of their Guru.

My Personal Experiences of the Master

(Sri Hildegard Bittner, Vienna, Austria)

God is our only friend. He manifests Himself to the Chela as the Divine Master. Through the grace of the Lord, I always experience His manifestation through Swami Sivanandaji. My experiences with Swamiji are unique and wonderful. The great Master is an embodiment of mercy and love and truth, and faith in the Eternal. At no time has he left me in the lurch, spiritually speaking, nor also in the hours of severe danger to life, or in the days of grave misfortune and trial. More than once he has saved my life at the last minute. Perpetual thanks I owe to him.

Highest trust, heartiest love and deepest veneration bind me to my great Guru. His profound and wise cautions always reached me just before the occurrence of any grave event, warning me in time. His special reinforced protection lasts close to seven days from the date of the arrival of his precious letter. Even otherwise, when I write to Swamiji, on the very day, perhaps due to communion through thoughts, I receive the answer to my problem in a symbolic form. In the hours of erroneous depression, the voice of my beloved Master resounds within myself, guiding and show-

ing me the way. Hopeless disorders in the material life solve by themselves.

Recently, when I suffered an unbearable physical pain, I called out, within my heart, to Swamiji. In the next moment I felt a very exhilarating electric current, extremely soothing and healing, running through my body, and soon I was free from all pains. I have now known that only he who seeks God sincerely and faithfully that can truly experience the blissful, healing grace of the great saint. Those who want only to gather intellectual knowledge for the sake of vanity and show, those who want to pray for only profit, those who still linger in their self-wrought illusions, sensations and earthly pleasures, instead of God-realization, would sooner or later come to grief. It is only a great Master like Swamiji who can save them and help them to find their true spiritual bearing. He has been doing this since decades, the divine task of leading the erring humanity on the right path. My only desire is to be allowed to stay with Swamiji in his spiritual proximity, in his Ashram, for some time, if it cannot be for always. Let me hope that through the grace of the Lord one day I would travel to my beloved Master.

SELF-SURRENDER

The great Vedantic assertions such as "I am," "I am the Brahman," "I am the immortal Atman," are meant only for the highly developed spiritual aspirant, in whom the lower nature is conspicuous by its absence. Until then, the appropriate attitude is "I am a servant," "Thou art all," "Thy will be done," "Make me Thy fit instrument."

—Swami Sivananda

Valued Contribution to Spiritual Revival

(Sri T.L. Venkatarama Iyer)

[Chairman, Law Commission, and formerly Judge of the Supreme Court of India]

Amidst the ranges of the divine Himalayas, on the banks of the sacred Ganga, there is an Ashram, "Ananda Kutir," where Swami Sivananda resides. The name of Swamiji is well-known in the world of spiritual and religious thought and has come to be intimately associated with the revival and spread of the Vedantic teaching. Vedanta marks the culmination of the philosophic thoughts of the *Vedas* and presents a concept of God, which is as logical and satisfying as it is scientific and modern.

CULTURAL WEALTH

There has, however, always been a school of thought which ignores and even denies the existence of a Creator, and holds that there is no life beyond death. This school is as old as the *Vedas*, and the story of Nachiketas is intended to refute the doctrines of this school and affirm that it is the physical body that is subject to death and not the soul; that the soul, the Jivatma, emanates from the Creator, the Parabrahma, just as a spark emanates from a flame, and that, ultimately, it is drawn into it and becomes merged in it.

The *Upanishads* mark the highest levels in philosophic thought reached in any age or clime, and form the most valuable of our heritage, and, if we have survived through the ages, with our civilization intact, notwithstanding all our political vicissitudes, it is due to this cultural wealth. The saying that while matter is destructible, spirit is not, that while nations who trust only to material wealth might be lost when that wealth is some day lost, that nations who live in their spiritual culture can never die, is best exemplified in the

history of this country, and it is with pride and satisfaction that we hear it said that ours is pre-eminently the land of spirituality.

SPIRIT AND MATTER

But, if the *Upanishads* have established the truth of the existence of God and expounded the relationship of man to Him, then what need is there for further philosophic thoughts and what purpose can Swami Sivananda or any other sage fulfil? The answer is, as has often been pointed out by our great philosophers, that man is, by nature, prone to forget the Creator, that matter and things of the earth have great attraction for him, and he is in danger of being lost in pursuit thereof, like a fly which rushes into fire.

The conflict between spirit and matter is as old as creation, and the history of philosophic thought shows that there are times when materialism is very much in the ascendent and spirituality on the wane. But the scriptures tell us that it is on such occasions that the Lord sends his chosen men and Himself appears to redeem the erring and to inspire confidence in, and to guide, the faithful, and that truth eventually triumphs. The great Sankaracharya was born at a time when the Sunyavadis (nihilists) had gained a large hold over the people, and, by his teachings, he re-established the reign of spirituality. In recent times, Swami Vivekananda, inspired with missionary zeal and enthusiasm, travelled far and wide, and proclaimed the eternal truths of the *Upanishads*.

SPIRITUALITY UNDER TRIAL

Since then, the cause of spirituality has come in for severe trials. Nation after

nation has become submerged under waves of materialism. To live a life of pleasure is what motivates the people's thoughts and actions, and they worship gold in the belief that wealth is pleasure and pleasure is wealth. Avidya (ignorance of spiritual values) dictates, and materialism rules. Then there are the marvellous achievements of modern science and they have induced in superficial minds the notion that there is no God. To add to the difficulties, there is the spread of communism.

Though the purpose of communism is the economic amelioration of the masses, it cannot be denied that, in fact, it has turned out to be the strongest bulwark of materialism and atheism. Its leaders make no secret of it that they look upon spirituality, at its best, as an idle exercise of the intellect and, at its worst, as a cunning device to enslave the masses. These trends have greatly influenced the trend of thought in this country, as elsewhere, and have very much shaken the faith of men, especially of the English-educated youngsters, in God and in their ancient scriptures.

Many are the foreigners who have, in recent times, come to this country to catch something of its reputed spiritual light and escape from the dark dungeons of materialism, and not a few of them have returned disappointed at the changed conditions and outlook which they have witnessed here. This, then, is the problem that confronts all leaders of spiritual thought—how to assist men to regain their soul and how to re-establish Vedanta as the philosophic religion of this world.

SIVANANDA AND SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

Among, those who have, in recent times, devoted themselves to the solution

of this problem, Swami Sivananda stands pre-eminent. He has been working at it now for over three decades, with unbounded enthusiasm, and his achievements are stupendous. He realized that if the youth of the country strayed away from the path of spirituality, it was not because they had become suddenly perverse or wicked, but because they had not the benefit of true knowledge.

There can be no doubt that it is our defective educational system that is responsible for this state of affairs. He accordingly set about to unfold to them the vast spiritual treasures of this country and, for that purpose, he wrote hundreds of treatises and tracts, expounding our philosophy and religion in simple language such as they could understand. His works are mostly in English, and that is as it should be, because the ravages of materialism are most severe among the English-educated persons in this country.

The philosophical heritage of India is in three parts—the *Upanishads*, the *Brahmasutras* of Vyasa Bhagawan and the *Bhagavadgita*. They are called 'Prasthanas Traya,' and all of them have been rendered by Swamiji into simple English. It cannot, however, be disputed that the great truths enshrined in them cannot be understood by all and sundry. It requires a disciplined mind and a clear intellect to grasp and assimilate them.

JNANA YAJNA

Now it is here that the *Yoga Shastra* comes to our aid. It tells us that truth can as clearly be seen in a mind, which is calm and composed and not ruffled by passions, as a face in a good mirror, and it prescribes an eight-fold course

for cultivating such a mind. The Swami has accordingly pressed into service the *Yoga Shastra* as a potent instrument in the dissemination of spiritual knowledge. He has published books on the practice of Yoga with a view to enable us to control our minds, and thereby realize God within ourselves.

But even Yoga, in its higher reaches might, like the 'Prasthanā Traya,' be above the average man. How, then, to bring home the spiritual truths to him? It is precisely this that the *Puranas* seek to do. Abstract truths might be above the understanding of the common man, but not stories narrating how, in the struggle between the forces of good and evil, it is the good that ultimately triumphs and the evil perishes.

So, the *Puranas* tell us that we should follow the path of Dharma, and be pure in our thoughts, words and deeds. These stories have exerted a profound influence alike on the learned and the unlettered, and perhaps there is no country in the world where the masses have been given spiritual education on such a large scale as in India, and that is directly due to the influence of the *Puranas* and, in particular, the *Ramayana*, the *Bhagavata* and the *Mahabharata*, the last having come to be regarded as the fifth *Veda*.

VALUED CONTRIBUTION

It is, therefore, no matter for surprise that Swamiji should have turned to them to instil faith and the knowledge of Dharma among the people. He has narrated the stories of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna with emphasis on the spiritual aspects thereof, giving prominence to Vedantic teachings, as for example, the eleventh part of the *Bhagavata*. Thus, there is nothing

in the religious and philosophical literature of India which he has not brought within the knowledge of the ordinary man, and, if India regains its position as the home of spirituality, it will, in no small measure, be due to the efforts of Swami Sivananda. The work of Swamiji is not confined to this country. His voice is heard by thousands of disciples all over the world and they find solace and happiness in his teachings and messages.

Knowledge can best be broadcast at the present day through books. The entire world must be deeply grateful to Swami Sivananda for the enormous contribution made by him to the spread of spiritual knowledge by the publication of a large number of books on a variety of subjects, covering the *Upanishads*, *Brahmasutras*, *Bhagavadgita*, and the *Puranas*.

Swamiji was a doctor before he became a Sannyasi, but even after he entered the holy order, he has continued to take interest in medicine. He has published books from which the laymen can get a knowledge of human anatomy, of the nature of diseases and of the cure for them. He has, in his Ashram, many Ayurvedic preparations, which act as tonics to the body and infuse fresh life and vigour into it. Sound health is valuable as means even for acquiring spiritual knowledge, and, as the great Kalidasa says, *Sariram adyam khalu dharma sadhanam*. Rightly do the devotees of Swamiji say, "Our master gives us health and knowledge and purifies our body and mind. He is truly one of the men chosen by the Lord for re-establishing the religion of the Vedanta in this world."

May the light of Sivananda shine for ever.

Swamiji's Influence in South Africa

(Sri Rubasoundrie Moodley, Durban, South Africa)

One may go on singing endlessly the praises of Swamiji, but as for me words cannot express my feelings for him. I do not know much about the Divine Life Society in India but, as for South Africa, I must say that the Society has been an eye-opener for many people. Before the South African DLS was opened here, there were few religious groups for us. We had very little opportunity for spiritual training, but the DLS has done much for the people in this respect since its inception a little more than a decade ago.

We have been coming in contact with many followers of Swamiji—people whom we have known before, and the change we find now in them is remarkable. Service to humanity has become the main purpose in life to many members in South Africa. Some of my personal friends, who were not religiously inclined, are turning more and more towards Swamiji, induced by my own personal experiences.

God, to children, is someone in the Heaven, but Swamiji, who has descended on earth as our saviour, is of flesh and blood, and children here, like the mice who followed the Pied Piper of Hamelin, follow the ideal that is Swamiji. This comparison, I know, is not appropriate, but there is no other way to express how ardently the children of our Branch are trying to follow the teachings of Swamiji. Through our Guru's grace may they grow up to be good citizens of South Africa.

Swamiji has become one of the great figures of this world. We are extremely lucky to come in contact with him, and may his teachings lead us along the divine path. I have not met Swamiji personally yet, but one day I hope to. Those that

have gone to India and seen him have told me of his dynamic personality and, although endowed with the material gifts of God, what a simple life he leads! I do not think that one needs eyes to see him, for my mind already has felt his presence.

Divine life meant nothing to me two years ago. When my mother became ill, somebody asked me to write to Swamiji, and by her speedy recovery we knew that our prayers had been answered by God, through Swamiji. Mother became engrossed in his books, and then gradually the whole family followed in her footsteps. A Branch of the Divine Life Society was opened in the district of the town where we live (there are nearly forty such Branches in South Africa), and since then we have never looked back. It is wonderful to know such a great figure, and especially to know what he can do for you.

I thought my prayers to Swamiji were never heard till I read a book of his. A boy continually prayed to his tutelary deity, and because he thought his prayers were not being answered, he decided to pray to another deity. ^{call} Then one day his tutelary deity visited him in his dream and told him how many times he had been saved and recounted some incidents. Then I too realized how many times I escaped death. The last time was when the girls of the tenth standard of our School went on an excursion to the beach. On our way we met with a serious accident and the girls who were sitting next to me were badly injured. Everybody thought it was a miracle that I was saved, but mother said this was due to Swamiji. I cannot thank him for it because "thanks" are not enough, and to repay him I must do some form of service to humanity.

Proclaim the Gospel of Divine Life

*(Swami Sivananda's Message to the 13th All-India Divine Life Conference,
held in this month in the city of Mysore)*

Salutations to the Supreme Being, the Indweller of all beings!

In the ancient, historic and holy city of Mysore you have all assembled at the divine feet of Mother Chamundeswari. The divine light will illumine the path of divine life.

There is a remarkable spiritual awakening in India and abroad, and so a greater need for the dissemination of the right spiritual knowledge. The war-weary West looks eastward for light. The East is shaking off its inertia and is struggling to hold the spiritual treasure that is slipping out of its hands. There is, therefore, a great need today for conferences like this, where truth is revealed for all to see.

Hoist the banner of divine life. Salute the flag of divine life. Proclaim before all humanity that truth alone triumphs, not falsehood; love alone triumphs, not hatred; purity alone triumphs, not sin. Beat the drum of Rama-Nam. Roar Om, Om, Sivo-ham, Soham; march forward to the divine realm of eternal bliss.

Proclaim your spiritual birthright. Do not beg or crave for the petty things of this world. Possess the inexhaustible treasure of contentment. Conquer the entire universe through love. Be good. Do good. Be kind. Be compassionate.

These are the virtues that everyone should try to acquire. If people every-

where busied themselves with this noble task, then hatred, disharmony, riots and wars will automatically come to an end. In the light of positive virtue, the darkness of negative evil will vanish. That is the secret.

Work hard. Waste not a single moment. There is a great mission before each one of you. The Lord has illumined your intellect and awakened your discrimination. It is now your sacred duty to bring about a similar awakening in others. This is Jnana Yajna. This is Yoga. This is dynamic Vedanta. This is the greatest worship of the Lord. Through this Jnana Yajna you will attain the goal of life, Self-realization, and enable others to attain it.

May God bless you all! May God crown the Conference with success!

[About the organizers of the 13th All-India Divine Life Conference, Swamiji said: "The noble and devout Sri Lakshmana Rao, assisted by a band of dynamic workers like Sri Mohan Ram, and guided by such noted personalities like Sri Gopalakrishna Setty, Sri Gopalraj Urs, Dr. Mariswamy and others, has created a spiritual stir in Mysore. All glory to these divine souls! By God's grace and the grace of Goddess Chamundeswari, may Mysore become an eternal powerhouse of divine life, radiating the currents of peace, love, truth and brotherhood throughout the world."]

REVELATION OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

It is in the little acts, speech, attitude and mode of behaviour that the spiritual aspirant reveals the extent of his progress, especially when he is undeliberate, and not the hours he spends in devotions. The more he is positive and the less negative, the greater the progress.

Sivananda On Kundalini Yoga

(A review of Sri M.P. Pandit, published in 'Mother India,' of Swami Sivananda's translation of and annotation on 'Yoga-Kundalini Upanishad')

Of the traditional 108 *Upanishads*, a large number are Vedantic in import. Some can be called physiological, some Mantra, some Dhyana *Upanishads*. There are a good many which deal with the technique of psycho-physical Yoga; the *Yoga-Kundalini Upanishad* comes under this category of *Yoga Upanishads*. It forms part of the *Krishna Yajurveda* and consists of three chapters. The subject-matter, as the title indicates, is the Kundalini Yoga.

It begins with an analysis of Chitta, that part of the mind which receives sensations and stores them in memory as Samskaras and Vasanas. These Vasanas, on the one hand, and Prana, the life-force, on the other, are responsible, says the *Upanishad*, for the activity of Chitta. The Vasanas and the Prana are interconnected, and the control of one results in the control of the other. If the Prana is regulated and brought under check, the Vasanas, too, are controlled and the Chitta falls silent. The *Upanishad* prescribes a triple method therefore:

(1) *Mitahara*, regulated and light food—agreeable and nutritious. The system should not be overloaded with solid food; there should be a judicious balancing of the solid and liquid diet, leaving part of the stomach empty.

(2) *Asana*, position of the body. The Padmasana and the Vajrasana are recommended, as they promote a healthy circulation of nervous energies and give a happy stability to the body.

(3) *Shakti-chalana*, movement of the Kundalini Shakti which is lying latent at the base of the spine. For this purpose it is necessary, says the *Upanishad*, to set into

motion the Saraswati Nadi which is situated on the west of the navel. By increasing the length of the inhalation of breath to specified limits, the Nadi is set into movement. This is followed by a physical manipulation of the abdominal muscles which shakes the Kundalini; it is stirred from right to left repeatedly, till it rises up and enters into the mouth of the Sushumna Nadi.

Pranayama, regulation of the breath, plays an important part in the awakening of this Kundalini Shakti, and the *Upanishad* devotes considerable part of its exposition to the subject. Briefly the process is this:

The sphincter muscles of the anus are contracted and the downward tendency of the Apana breath is arrested; that Vayu is forced upward; and when this Apana reaches the location of Agni, fire in the region of the navel, the breath of Vayu blows the Agni into a flame. This Agni and the heated Vayu join the Prana from above, which, in its turn, is forced downward. A terrific state of heat is generated, and, as a result, the Kundalini is pressured into awakening. When so aroused it makes a hissing noise, stands erect and enters the aperture of the Sushumna, which is called the Brahmadvara, door to Brahman. The Prana by itself joins the Kundalini when it enters the Sushumna; and when this takes place, there is a steadiness of mind—a condition which, when confirmed, is termed the Unmāni-avastha.

By practice the Shakti so awakened and set into movement is led step by step through the several centres or lotuses along the spinal axis, Merudanda, till it joins the highest Lotus at the crown of the head,

the Sahasrara, and then there is a down-pour of Bliss. When this state of Bliss is induced again and again, there grows a condition of being in which one is utterly lost in the consciousness of sheer Ananda and forgets the physical body; there is a growing disassociation between one's consciousness and one's body—with all that it means—and the Yogin attains an inner state of release, Mukti, which is complete with the shedding of the body at death.

Though the body is subjected to a good deal of pressure during these exercises, it is wrong to attribute its illnesses to Yoga, as some are wont to do. The text then gives an interesting list of the causes of the diseases of the body: sleep during day-time, late vigils at night, sexual excesses, mixing in crowds, retention of urine and faeces, unwholesome food and 'laborious mental operation with Prana.'

Though the broad lines, on which the Kundalini Yoga proceeds, are always the same, there are a number of methods and processes which are used, varying with individual requirements. One of the most important of these is the Khechari Mudra described in the second chapter of the *Upanishad*. It is also called the Lambika Yoga. The Khechari Vidya consists of two operations or Kriyas: Chhedana and Dohana.

The *frenum linguae*, the lower part of the front of the tongue, is cut, Chhedana, for the space of a hair with a sharp knife once a week and turmeric powder is applied to it. This continues for six months. Thereafter, butter is applied to the tongue and it is stretched in the manner of milking the cow's udder, Dohana. When the tongue gets sufficiently lengthened, the Yogin folds it back to touch and cover the posterior portion of the nostrils, in the throat, where-

by the breath is stopped completely.

For those who have a natural long tongue, the operation of cutting is not necessary. This practice, it is described, gives one many powers, *viz.*, walking in air, living underground, *etc.* The Khechari has its own Mantra, the Melana Mantra.

This Mudra is called the Khechari because, says the *Dhyānabindu Upanishad* (v. 82), in this state the Chitta moves in *kha* (Akasa) and also because the tongue goes into the *kha* (the opening of the skull in the throat).

After these descriptions of the different processes employed in Shakti Chālana, the text goes on to stress on the goal of all Yoga—attainment of the Indivisible Reality which is reached through the several states of its one Consciousness, manifest in the individual as Visva, Taijasa and Prajna, and in the universe as Virat, Hiran-yagarbha and Isvara. It concludes:

"Then that alone remains which is soundless, touchless, formless, and deathless, which is the eternal, and odourless, which has neither beginning nor end, which is greater than the great and which is permanent, stainless and without decay."

The *Upanishad* gives an idea how the Yoga of the Tantras was utilized to reach the goal of the Advaita Vedānta. Swamiji's Introduction and Annotations are very helpful. His warnings against amateurish attempts to practise this Yoga without the close guidance and active help of a competent Guru are necessary and welcome.

This edition contains the full Sanskrit text and a free translation, verse by verse. A very useful publication.

[N.B. The above-mentioned book is now out of print.]

Saint of 'Ananda Kutir'

(Sri Hari Prasad, Saurashtra)

I read in some journal that Swami Sivananda lives in Rishikesh. God inspired me, and my daughter, Kirtida, and I determined to have his Darshan. We went to Rishikesh and took bath in the holy Ganga. The appearance of the Ganga there is grand and beautiful. The glory of nature in Rishikesh is unique. If you want to see a rare combination of peace and beauty, you must go there.

'Ananda Kutir' (Abode of Joy) is worth the name. The Ashram is full of bliss and joy. The holy Ganga flows by the lower part of the institution, which has now grown into a sizable colony called Sivanandanagar. The place is surrounded by the blue-black hills of the Himalayas. In the midst of activity, there is complete silence in the Ashram. At times the silence is broken by the ringing of the bells in the temple, chanting of prayers and Sankirtan.

We were fortunate to be led into the presence of the great saint. I was pleased at the first sight. I at once prostrated myself before this holy man. His towering personality radiated a peculiar lustre. Peace and grace were beaming from his face. Love and service are everywhere evident at the Ashram. Here I saw the Yoga Museum, the Printing Press, the Akhanda Kirtan Hall. My joy knew no bound when I saw the Hospital, the Annakshetra, the Library,

and the other centres of service. I heard the holy saint singing devotional songs, and found him doing incessant mental Japa.

Spiritual aspirants and lay devotees practise the Yoga of synthesis at this institution, with the object of God-realization, under the guidance of Swamiji. It is a unique Ashram. There is perhaps no such Ashram anywhere, which welcomes all types of persons of every religion. The daily programme is written on the notice board. In the morning, afternoon and evening, lectures are given according to the programme.

Sometimes, at the evening Satsanga, there are classical music and dance performances by visiting artistes, in addition to routine Sankirtan and Bhajan by the Ashramites. The evening scene at the Ashram has created a wonderful impression in my mind. The atmosphere of the place was full of devotion and serenity. The great saint does not denounce science and has given a new turn to spirituality, to suit modern conditions. There is a fine combination of the precepts of all religions in his teachings. He can be approached easily. The wonderful charm of his Ashram is such that one is reluctant to leave the place. The Ashram is really a blessing to many a wounded heart.

WHO AM I ?

It is true that through enquiry such as "Who am I" one attains the state of realization and oneness with the Reality. One may be, in truth, identical with the supreme Soul, but the enquiry of "Who am I," while reminding the aspirant of his real nature, also should make him aware of the littleness of his little self, the base propensities which keep him on the level of an animal, his gross selfishness and egoism, and give him the strength to rise above that which does not behove him.

Guide and Protector of the Devout

(Sri K.L. Mathur, Sivanandanagar)

Sri Gurudev belongs to the whole world. His mission knows no regional or political boundaries. Catholicity of ideas and the capacity to view all people alike constitute one of the shining characteristics of Gurudev. Few, even among sages, have manifested such remarkable tolerance and broadmindedness as Swamiji Maharaj has in his exposition of the ancient wisdom, not for any particular country but for all. The Divine Life Society has more than four hundred Branches all over the world, counting among its members thousands of people belonging to all religions and races, but united with the one purpose of attaining the goal of life through spiritual realization.

INTEGRAL YOGA

Always solicitous about the welfare of his followers, Gurudev keeps personal contact with as many of them as possible, and to many scattered all over the world he writes letters, clearing doubts, explaining points of view, giving guidance, and, above all, bestowing his blessings for their spiritual advancement. The glorious concept of the unity of Guru and disciple is exemplified in his relationship with his followers.

Gurudev is a great Karma Yogi, following the teachings of *Bhagavadgita*. He believes in his mission ardently and wants to further it by every means, for the betterment of the world at large. The various activities in his Ashram are all directed towards this objective.

Selfless service forms an important part in his Yoga of synthesis. The well-known motto of the Divine Life Society is symbolic of this integral Yoga—'serve' for Karma Yoga, 'love' for Bhakti Yoga, 'meditate' for Raja Yoga, and 'realize' for Jnana

Yoga. 'Be good and do good' constitute his ethical Mantra.

Gurudev is an embodiment of the Gita ideal that the realized sage should not abandon service but work for the benefit of the world.

MOTHERLY AFFECTION

Swamiji's heart is like that of a mother who, even at the risk of her own life, strives to save her child from death, if need be. He is full of the spirit of Ahimsa, and struggles day and night to remove the sufferings of all living beings. To quote one of his main teachings: "Just as the flame of a lamp is extinguished when the oil and the wick are burnt up, so also the mind gets lost and becomes one with Brahman when desires and egotism are destroyed."

How sweetly and simply Gurudev teaches us! He is not one who is to be held in awe and fear. He is sweetness personified. He never rebukes anyone in a way that would hurt, but only by sweet persuasion does he correct the mistakes of others. Just like a mother he teaches us by his own silent, loving example than by harsh and irksome discipline. Our Swamiji teaches us in simple and sweet words: "Eat a little, drink a little, pray a little," and so on, so that by gradual and easy processes, we, who are like ignorant children on the spiritual path, can acquire discipline of mind and body, and come to love God and godliness.

The mother does not thrust her knowledge and discipline down her children's throats but instructs them in such a way that the tender minds could learn easily but surely and respect and follow what has been taught.

We find the influence of such noble mothers as of Shivaji and Gandhiji on them. Shivaji's mother had inculcated into him the traits of heroism, nobility, piety and patriotism. So was the case with Gandhiji. The seed of spirituality was sown in the mind of Gandhiji, in his childhood, by his mother. The Guru is the spiritual mother of the disciple. Our Gurudev is a true symbol of the Divine Mother. Let us, therefore, acquire a proper Matri-Bhav (son's attitude towards mother) to Gurudev. One cannot have this attitude for the Guru unless one has the spirit of self-surrender, faith, trust and love that a child has towards his own mother.

HARMONIOUS BLEND

Gurudev is a beautiful blend of spiritual traits, wit, humour, commonsense, scholarship and deep intuition. I had earlier looked up to Gurudev as my divine father, but I was not so much aware of his life-transforming activities and dynamism, and his sweet and silent grace until coming here.

Even today he is very fond of two-party Kirtan. At his bidding the ladies would sing in chorus "Sita Sita Ram bolo," while the men would sing back "Radhe Radhe Shyam bolo," and unless Swamiji asks them to stop, they have to go on singing.

If one has got the requisite faith in him and purity of heart and if one is able to effect absolute self-dedication to his feet, then, I am sure, one will never fail to cure all the ills of one's life.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH RELIGION ?

The trouble with the followers of religions is that, while they concede a token acknowledgement of their basic ideals, they lose themselves in the little details of the social codes and ritualistic formalities which they have devised in such a way, under the cloak of religion, as to promote their group interests and whet their group egos, even though these might run contrary to common good and perpetrate injustice and cruelty.

AN EXPERIENCE

Gurudev does not like to see his devotees in trouble. He is always by the side of one who totally surrenders to him. This year, in the month of May, when I was on my pilgrimage to the shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinath, I included the shrine of Tunganath Mahadev also. The first four miles of climbing on the Tunganath peak (13,000 feet above sea level) I did easily but, during the last two miles of tedious ascent, my strength failed and I simply staggered, my heart beat fast and I thought that my end was near. Still, I plodded on slowly and perseveringly, digging the iron prong of my stick into the ground at every foot to steady myself, mentally repeating. "Guru Guru japna, aur sab swapna" ("repeat the name of Guru, for all else is dream").

Believe it or not, I actually felt somebody whispering into my ear, "Take courage, I am with you." Who could he be but my Gurudev himself? So we see that he is not only at the foot of the Himalayas on the Ganga's bank but everywhere, all over the world, helping his disciples and devotees in times of danger and need. I mustered up courage and at last reached the top of the summit, where the shrine is located. My hands and feet were almost frozen and I could hardly hold the stick in my hand. The Tunganath peak was enveloped in haze and an extremely cold wind was blowing.

Our Gurudev is an omnipresent spiritual guide in this world, and is indeed a moving commentary of the *Bhagavadgita*. May his blessings be upon us all!

The 'Treasure' I Possess and Preserve

(Srimati Rukmini Krishnamoorty, Bangalore)

The 'treasure' I possess is a common 'treasure' as thousands have a share in it. But the beauty is that everyone feels that this 'treasure' exclusively belongs to him or her. The uniqueness of this 'treasure' is that the more you draw from it, the more its contents increase. This 'treasure' is open to all, and you, too, can have a share in this unique 'treasure' of 'Ananda Kutir' if you really long for it. You need not have to apply for getting your share or spend any money for it, but you have only to ask and pray for it. It is as easy as that, and if your thought-currents begin to work, you will automatically be drawn to the Sage of 'Ananda Kutir.' There is no doubt at all.

Though Swamiji is regarded as a saint by devotees all over the world, to me he is no other than Siva Himself. Many of my brother and sister-disciples consider him an Avatara of Sri Krishna. I consider that Siva Himself has come in the form of Sivananda to bestow His grace upon this world, though many are yet to realize this fact. Those who have come to the feet of my Gurudev are really fortunate, for they have realized his greatness.

The greatness of this saint lies in his equal vision towards all beings. He treats the saint and the sinner alike. Even the worst criminal receives the best treatment in his hands. His policy is to decry the sin and not the sinner. He neither encourages complaints nor himself complains about anyone. He is ever in a blissful state of mind, though he may look just like an ordinary person in his talks and jokes.

Saint Kabir says:

हरि रते गुरु ठौर है, गुरु रते नहीं ठौर ।

This means that "if Hari (God) gets angry, you can take refuge at the feet of your Guru, but if your Guru gets angry with you, you have no place to go at all." But the fact is that my Gurudev never gets angry even with the worst sinner. On the other hand, he pours out more and more of love on such a sinner and converts him into a saintly person. He is a light unto himself and shows the light divine to one and all.

Kabir says again:

कोटी जन्म का पंथ या, पल में पहुँचा जाय ।

It means that the time of the journey to reach the goal of life, that is Self-realization, is such that one has to take several millions of births, but due to the grace of his (Kabir's) Satguru, he could reach it in a few moments. This fact is very true of our Satguru, when we think of his immense kindness and benediction. The moment we receive his grace, we begin to enjoy a blissful state of mind, and negative thoughts leave us quickly. If you are a sincere seeker, the thought-currents will flow between yourself and Gurudev effortlessly, and you will be silently led on your spiritual path to the highest goal. Such is the greatness of my Gurudev.

To us all, 'Ananda Kutir' is our own ancestral house. When we sit at the feet of our Gurudev, we feel that we are with our parents. He feeds us like a mother, and advises us like a father. Even a stay of a couple of days makes us physically and mentally strong. All our worldly worries come to an end. If today I am in a joyful state to write this article, it is only due to my Gurudev and his grace. May the light of God enlighten us for ever.

Future of Humanity

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

Salutations to God, the Father of all humanity! May His light guide mankind.

All are children of the Lord. The whole universe has been created by the Lord. He is the protector of all. He is the life of life, soul of all souls. Guided by wisdom, that is the light of God reflected in the higher nature of man, mankind will certainly find its way to peace, plenty and prosperity.

Just as a loving mother allows her child to stand up and walk by itself, merely standing aside as a witness, but ever ready to prevent it from injuring itself by falling down, the Lord, who has given man intelligence to do the right, gives him freedom to shape his own destiny, and though he may suffer through his ignorance, the Lord will protect him in time and will not allow him to harm himself. Even though, he may have wasted away his present life, God will redeem him in the next, or the next.

If man uses his intelligence aright and walks the path of virtue, his progress is smooth and rapid. If he must misuse that intelligence and wilfully misdirect his mind for destructive purposes, then he will learn the hard way. Then the path to progress will lie through a vale of tears.

Humanity has survived many calamities, and will survive the present threat to its very existence, too. But, it is up to human intelligence to decide whether the path should be pleasant or very painful.

The current trend augurs well for the future of humanity. Great nations are coming closer and closer together, in spite of the threat of war and unabated cold war, in an endeavour to understand each other, co-operate with each other and be helpful to each other. Great scientific in-

ventions have made the earth shrink. Trade and commerce link all nations and have made them interdependent. It is being increasingly realized all over the world that no nation can live completely cut off from the rest of the world.

The time is not far off when even the man-made boundaries will be regarded in their true light—as convenient divisions made to serve man, facilitate administration and safeguard the cultural interests of the peoples, and not as walls and curtains put up to divide one nation from another. Boundaries may exist as boundaries exist marking out one village from another, but they should no longer become the bones of contention between world powers.

All power—material, mental and spiritual, scientific, economic and political—should be directed to the betterment of all mankind. Mankind is one family. This must be realized, sooner or later, by all—the sooner the better for all. Even among the children of the same parents, tastes differ, temperaments vary, and capacities are dissimilar.

Differences and variety are inherent in nature. But they should not lead to destructive activities, wars, riots and quarrels. The five fingers on our hand are not of the same shape or size; each has its own specific purpose, and all of them together 'do what we want! Man's intelligence lies in discovering how best each one can serve the world at large. His mind should ever be constructive, positive; his heart should be filled with love, goodwill and compassion.

Look at the suffering masses! Imagine the magnitude of human suffering throughout the world. Have you done

something to relieve someone of suffering? Ask yourself each night: "Have I done one good act today and relieved someone of pain and suffering?" If the answer is "Yes," and if everyone thus answers in

the affirmative, then you have lived well, humanity would progress towards peace, plenty and prosperity.

May God bless you all.

Voice of Love

(Swami Sivananda-Shantananda, Delhi)

As I walked along with my Gurudev on the path of spiritual quest, there came a Voice of Love from him:

"Behold, my child! I see a man toiling to remove heavy stones, weeds and filth from a bend of the river bank. On my asking why he takes all that trouble he says with a smile, 'To enable the water to flow freely unto the main currents of mother Ganga!'"

"At another spot, I see a man engaged in laboriously chiselling an ugly block of stone, perspiring and toiling hard. 'Why, brother, do you take all this trouble day in and day out, irrespective of heat and rain?' Prompt comes the reply, 'With a hope that some day, I may get a more perfect figure with beauty in it!'"

"And yet elsewhere I see a man trying to peel out the rough, fibrous coat of a cocoanut, with shaking, feeble hands. Even before I question, he says 'You see, my friend, if I peel out the rough cover and break open the hard shell, only then can I find the sweet essence inside.'"

I turned to my kind Divine Father, as his Voice of Love came thus:

"Ah my child, remove the weeds and stones of jealousy, lust, greed, hatred, and hit the hard rock of selfishness, for then the currents of divine love shall flow freely and make thee one with every creature—be it a worm, bird, cat or dog or human being.

"After chiselling out all that is ugly and hard, such as cruelty, untruth, suspicion, anger, thou shalt attain all that is fine, godly and beautiful within, full of kindness, love, charity and forgiveness."

Then with a cheering smile, he added:

"Without removing the tasteless, fibrous cover and the hard shell of the lower nature, the ego, you cannot reach the sweetness of the essence within. Thus, my child, remove the veil of ignorance; for then and then only shalt thou attain truth, peace, and bliss eternal. May Lord bless you all to reach this goal on the spiritual path.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH SPIRITUAL CULTURE?

If the spiritual culture of a people failed to instil in them the fundamental qualities of courage and integrity in individual and public life, if, in spite of glibly talking of Upanishadic or any other scriptural glories, it quietly permitted such barbarous customs as the suttee and perpetration of inhumanity to the so-called untouchables, then there must have been something dreadfully wrong with the prevalent state of that culture. The culture of a nation is not something that is found in the books but which is alive in the people.

Palm of Sivananda

(Sri S. Subba Rao, New Delhi)

HEAD LINE

The head line starts from the mount of Jupiter and, slightly separated from the line of life, runs through the entire palm. The line is deep and well drawn. It sends several branches to the Jupiter mount. The Swami is ambitious by nature (in his case the spiritual side is more predominant) and possessed of great determination and perseverance. He has excellent clarity of intellect, which is also sharp. The elevations from the head line indicate the great effort made for intellectual and spiritual advancement. The line is ending between the mounts of Mars and Moon.

The subject of the palm is endowed with a practical temperament, combined with gifted imagination. The fork at the end of the line indicates a wonderful tactfulness. This indication is further strengthened by the powerful mount of Mercury, which adds a fund of commonsense, great intellect and understanding of human nature. Spiritual aspiration, ambition and achievements are depicted by the powerful lines going from the head line to the Jupiter mount, gaining the strength of Jupiter. The length of the line also indicates an excellent power of memory, which will not fade with the advance of age. Swamiji possesses a second head line in the left hand, which is a very important indication regarding his tenacity to the cause he chooses.

LIFE LINE

The life line starts from the Jupiter mount, is long and sweeps at the end towards Moon. The subject of the palm should be of robust health, possess long life and settle down in a far off place from his region of birth. The travel lines on the

life line, with the lines on the Moon, denote that the subject will cross the seas and travel extensively. Although it is impertinence on my part to mention the longevity of Swamiji, it can safely be taken that he must continue to bless humanity up to his 78th or 80th year easily, in the human form.

THUMB

Swamiji's thumb is very long and the phalanges are well developed. He should possess sweet reasonableness, but also tremendous determination and infallible reasoning. The suppleness denotes his adjustable temperament. He is a fit personality in any company, a saint among saints, a diplomat among diplomats, a scientist among scientists, an intellectual among intellectuals, and a child among children.

FINGERS

The finger tips are spatulate. They are also fairly long. He possesses tremendous energy for work. The length connotes his love for details and meticulous attitude. The pointed mercury finger, combined with a powerful Jupiter, has given him 'Mantra Siddhi' or powers to effect unusual things in an occult way. The powerful Saturn has also added to his occult and spiritual proficiency.

JUPITER

Jupiter is extremely powerful. Swamiji is a born leader. He has great individuality. He is highly ambitious and his ambitions are made to realize themselves. The ruling planet of this exceptional hand appears to be Jupiter. Highest spiritual attainments are realizable and the ambition of spreading his gospel is also attainable. His activities will be in several fields and almost equal success should attend his pur-

suits. The numerous straight, deep lines on the mount of Jupiter enable Swamiji to develop in the various branches of work—religious, medical, literary, *etc.* The achievement of his aims are indicated through four main pursuits. Although adaptable and sweet, the subject will show great firmness and individuality, where basic principles are concerned and no compromise is expected in such matters.

SATURN

This planet is very powerful in the palm, as it should be in the case of an Yogis. It helps in asceticism and renunciation. Since the fate line (Saturn line) is very strong, Swamiji should get plenty of money, which will be utilized for the various purposes of his choice. The philosophical bent and the awareness of the suffering of humanity and the melancholic touch of the personality of the subject are given by Saturn. The same planet makes the Swami a hard worker and a hard taskmaster. As regards work, he would not spare anybody, however near or dear to him. In other words, work is a religion to him, and he would always be willing to take up new and additional responsibilities though they may not directly pertain to him. The nearer a man is to Swamiji, he expects more work from him.

Saturn, with a slightly adverse Moon, creates rheumatic complaints and affects the joints. These troubles are ultimately reflected on the functioning of the heart. About the age of 78 to 80 the health aspect assumes great importance.

SUN

The Sun line is well drawn, but its real effect on the life of the subject should have been from his 45th year (in Swamiji's case from 1932). From 47th year onward he starts influencing humanity, and his influence spreads far and wide by his 56th year

(1943). From the 60th year (1947) onward his name assumes a great importance; his following from abroad is much more marked from this period. The fish mark on the Sun mount denotes culture, a developed mind and wisdom. The powerful Sun not only indicates great eminence and limelight but also the subject's love of fine arts such as music, literature, poetry, painting, *etc.*

MERCURY

In my humble opinion, next to Jupiter, Mercury is the most powerful planet in this hand. Swamiji's profession as a doctor, his powerful gift of speech, expression in writing, and his authorship of hundreds of volumes, his businesslike habits, great learning, and broadness of vision in spiritual matters, *etc.*, are all due to the powerful Mercury. Swamiji would have become a great man in any walk of life owing to this powerful Mercury. The star on the Mercury has made him an acclaimed author with a masterly pen. The liquid diction and simple and crisp expression, *etc.*, all are given by Mercury.

His success as a doctor has also been due to the influence of this planet. The benefits of Mercury started flowing on to Swamiji even from his 24th year (1911). A slightly greater intensity of this planet must have been felt from 42nd year (1929) and much more from 47th onward, which is, in his case, mostly in writings and lecturing (that was the time when he undertook lecture tours). From 49th year, the full effect of Mercury is noticed, which should continue throughout his entire life.

MOON

This planet is highly developed in the palm, which has both good and bad aspects. The subject of the palm has been gifted with great imagination, creative ge-

nius and originality, and all these characteristics are assets in his pursuits. The Moon, as far as health is concerned is to exert an unfavourable influence. Stomach troubles as also complaints of the joints are indicated.

MARS

Mars is both good and bad. On the favourable side, Mars has given the subject great courage, dash and physical strength. On the negative side, it should have given considerable suffering, opposition, initial hardships and restlessness. There should have been a number of enemies in the earlier stages who tried to create troubles in the pursuits of the Swami and spoil his good work and name.

VENUS

Just like the other two planets, Venus is both good and bad in this hand. On the favourable side, Venus has given the Swami kindness, love of fine arts, especially music, lofty emotions, useful for spiritual and literary pursuits. On the negative side, the domestic life has been taken away and made him a renunciate.

MARRIAGE LINE

The marriage line swept downward and has been touched by a powerful dart from the Mars. This is an unfavourable indication for a successful married life. The line has helped the subject to become a Sannyasi by liberating him from the bondage of domestic life.

HEART LINE

The heart line is very well placed in the hand, and it ends in a fork on the mount of Jupiter. It indicates a deeply affectionate nature, a sacrificing bent of mind, cosmic love for humanity, and a catholic attitude towards various other religions. The absence of religious bigotry is prominent.

FATE OR FORTUNE LINE

The fate line starts from the plain of Mars and has leanings towards Moon. Swamiji was independent even from his early school days and had great freedom, especially from his 18th year onward. His 20th (or 21st) year should have been very good for educational success, and in a way his earning career also should have started from then onward. The 23rd year was a very important period for a regular start in life. The 26th year indicated substantial changes in his professional career and other circumstances. This is one of the important stages, when professional stability was almost achieved. He should have started earning a good name as a skilful doctor from now. In the 29th year he received some encouragement and backing in profession (a very encouraging time). The 30th year has some problems—professional, personal and domestic—for a few months. The outcome was, however, encouraging. In the middle of the 32nd year there was, similarly, some disturbed period for a short while, but once again the results were quite encouraging. In the 35th year considerable efforts were made in the professional sphere with satisfactory results.

In the 37th or 38th year there was great inner struggle and it was a period of suspense for about three months. A new start took place in this year. (Swamiji returned to India in 1923, in his 36th year—to a life of renunciation—Ed). From 37th or 38th to 41st year, mental and physical discomforts are noticed. The outcome of the struggle and fight was the *enlightenment* achieved probably sometime in the 42nd year. From this period onward (42nd year) Swamiji's prominent spiritual life began. The 45th year and the 47th year show further enhancement and greater spiritual activity. However, in the 47th

year there were certain problems in the matter of health and other aspects.

The island on the fate line, between the period of 42nd and 51st year, denotes that although there was great progress in the dissemination of spiritual ideals by Swamiji, there should have been a number of detractors who tried to misinterpret his activities and pursuits. For the time being they might have succeeded to a certain extent, but ultimately, when the 52nd year came, all their efforts proved useless. On the other hand, a greater following and wider respect and devotion resulted out of the negative propaganda of the detractors.

From the 56th year onward the spiritual and social work of Swamiji rose to greater heights. The following in India and other countries increased, more books were written and published, and the gospel spread far and wide. The Ashram became a great centre of pilgrimage.

From the 60th year a further stage of progress in the various activities commenced. There were considerable backing and support from devotees, which enabled the task on hand to be executed with greater ease and efficiency, especially from the 66th year. In the 67th year new ventures and activities were taken up with complete success and this period strangely coincided with the year in which a "Parliament" of the Religions of the world was held. Till the 76th year, the activities of the Ashram and the allied institutions will receive great patronage from the people of all walks of life and of different countries.

FUTURE PREDICTION

During the coming years the Divine Life Society will establish a number of new Branches, and more and more people will take the lead from Swamiji in the pursuit of their spiritual aspirations. A further impetus will be received from the 77th year, but the health of the great soul will be disturbed during his 77th and 78th years, and this will be connected with the heart and the circulatory system. Although physical infirmities may have their full sway, the intellectual faculties, clarity of mind and the spiritual radiance will continue to maintain their apex as long as his body lasts. Swamiji will be greatly satisfied about the progress of his spiritual mission and with the course of events to occur sometime in the 74th and 75th years.

The Mission started by Swamiji will expand by leaps and bounds in future, and bigger institutions will be established all over the world, to continue his Mission.

May the Lord grant Swamiji many more years of life on the blessed earth for the emancipation of the millions of souls entangled in the material snares of life. May the Lord also give this noble Yogi good health, so that the hundreds of visitors who daily visit the Ashram may be blessed with his holy Darshan.

I am greatly indebted to Swamiji for the blessings he showered on me and the favours bestowed during my two visits to the Ashram. I crave for more opportunities to visit the Ashram and have the benefit of his divine Darshan.

USEFULNESS OF RELIGION AND CULTURE

The extent of the usefulness of any religion and culture is dependent on how far they are able to exert a practical influence in moulding the life of the people, in shaping their aspirations and personalities, in giving them strength and courage to save themselves from the soul-killing, depraving effects of poverty and pestilence, and mass demoralization that sets in after having failed to thwart foreign domination. After all, religion and culture have also a vital role in serving the general interests of the people.

Fulfilment of a Beseeching Heart

(Sri Sivananda-Supphiah, Kuala Lumpur, Malaya)

It is my fervent prayer to the all-merciful Lord to bless our beloved Gurudev with radiant health and long life, so that he may continue to serve for many more years and shed his divine and redeeming lustre on the suffering humanity.

Several are the ways and means which His Holiness adopts to impart his teachings to humanity. Of these, the most potent and admirable means is the Divine Life Society which he established at Rishikesh in 1936, as the base for disseminating his spiritual knowledge, widely and effectively. This institution has been accepted even by those of other religions, on account of its broad and universal ideals and aims. Hundreds of its Branches have sprung up during the last 25 years, not only in India but also in other parts of the world. They stand out like beacon-lights, and many are the ship-wrecked souls that have sighted these lights and reached the harbour of spiritual enlightenment, peace and bliss.

The teachings of His Holiness are so catholic and all-embracing that whoever comes in contact with them are readily transformed into a new being. Many pious souls from different parts of the world, after experiencing the inspiration of his divine teachings, run to the 'Abode of Bliss' (Ananda Kutir) to have Darshan of their Gurudev and to share with him the love of

selfless service and the desire to spread the right knowledge that yields lasting peace and happiness.

The various journals, published from the Divine Life Society headquarters at Sivanandanagar, render yeoman service to humanity by infusing in them the redeeming hope of life, and instilling a new spirit and determination to live as ideal seekers of truth. The publications of Swamiji—books and journals—contain soul-stirring teachings and flashes of wisdom in a simple but forceful language. He has ingeniously selected the international English language as the medium of disseminating his teachings and to diffuse his cosmic love for all humanity, irrespective of caste, creed or colour, in the form of selfless service.

His Holiness is verily a reincarnation of the all-merciful Lord who, of His own free-will, reincarnates as saints and saviours from time to time, in order to redeem the afflicted, the downtrodden and the depressed, and to recover the 'lost sheep.' The devotion and love the writer has towards His Holiness are expressed in the following outpourings of his heart, which, at a moment of ecstasy, he meekly collected in the golden cup of his adoration for Swamiji and laid at his lotus feet on 20th October, 1959, as an offering, when on a visit to Sivanandanagar.

PRAYER IN EXASPERATION

I

O light of the Himalayas,
Beloved lord of my heart,
How long am I to wait for thee,
At the door-step of the 'Abode of Bliss,'
Beseeching thy benediction and grace?
My legs are failing,

They support me no more;
But I would rather perish here
Than retreat without thy grace.

II

Day and night I pray to thee,
To lift me up from the ocean of Samsara,
Teeming with the monsters

Of lust, greed and hatred,
 Always ready to swallow me in wrath;
 I shout for thy help
 From the top of my voice,
 But why thou heedest not
 My cry of despair?
 The reason for this I know not why,
 But wilt thou not save me, my lord?

III

I have read in books,
 Gathered from thy Jnana Ganga,
 Even heard from thy saintly disciples,
 That thou hast appeared in distant lands,

To give Darshan to beseeching souls,
 That thou hast even talked to them,
 Soothing their afflicted hearts
 With thy boundless cosmic love;
 But, alas, in the case
 Of this child forlorn,
 Thou hast kept him waiting so long.
 I prostrate at thy lotus feet,
 Pray to thee, my kindly light,
 To lead me along the path divine,
 To protect and save me
 From worldly traps and pitfalls,
 O my saintly guide, my saviour!.

PRAYER OF ENTREATY

IV

Since I came to know thee,
 I have no one else but thee;
 Thou art my mother, father,
 God, Guru and everybody,
 And other than thee I have nobody,
 For I seek only to be one with thee.
 I assure thee, my lord,
 That one thing is certain,
 That whatever may come to pass,
 Even if the whole world is lost,
 I cannot be detached from thy lotus feet.

V

What if everything comes to an end?
 But if I stand firm
 In my devotion to thee,
 I would fear nothing, fear none,
 For I have taken shelter at thy feet,
 Like the Gopas of Vrindaban
 On the Govardhan Giri,
 Held aloft by Lord Krishna.

VI

O friend of the forlorn,
 Cast thou thy gracious eyes
 On this humble soul:

O grant me the boon
 That I may become the dust of thy feet;
 Other than this I seek nothing, my lord,
 For in this alone is eternal bliss,
 In this alone is Kaivalya Moksha.

VII

My beloved lord,
 O when shall I be free
 From the trammels of worldly ties,
 Which are but golden shackles,
 Yet bondage all the same?
 When shall be that day
 When I could pledge my whole life
 In thy holy service,
 In the service of the Lord?
 When shall I be cleansed
 Of all the dross of worldly desires,
 That I may become thy worthy disciple?

VIII

Wave after wave of mundane troubles
 Roll over me with heavy onslaught;
 Yet by thy grace have I overcome
 All difficulties and sorrows,
 To survive anew, with my faith in thee,
 Without being lost by stress and strain.

PRAYER FULFILLED

Wednesday, the twentyfirst of October,
 In the year of nineteen-fiftynine,
 Was the happiest day of my whole life,
 Nay, it was the day of my salvation,
 When thou bestowed on me
 The most valuable treasure in the world,
 When my heart had almost burst to pieces
 With swelling joy and bliss divine,
 When thou accepted me as thy disciple,
 And when thou said with kindly grace
 That from that day
 I was thy spiritual child,
 That from that day my name
 Was entwined with thine.
 My beloved Guru had at last

Turned his benevolent gaze on me,
 And redeemed me for ever.

X

Therefore, beloved brother-disciples!
 Whoever has chance to read these lines,
 Please be sure to know
 That if you have unswerving
 Faith in the Guru,
 If you love him with heart and soul
 And do his bidding in your Sadhana,
 You are sure to be graced
 By this noble saint and saviour,
 And the all-pervading Sivananda
 Will become a divine prisoner
 Of your pure and devoted heart.

FOUNTAINHEAD OF LOVE AND SERVICE

(Sri Eve Katzman, Ottawa, Canada)

About seven years ago, the name of Swami Sivananda was first spoken to me by a friend from Ceylon. When the books of the Swami were given me, a new world opened up, as it were. In a sense, it was a world always known, but little remembered. The books were like nectar, to one who has been long thirsty and yet not aware of the thirst.

Then suddenly, three years ago, there had been much suffering. Yet Swamiji upheld me, gave me renewed faith and strength to bear the loss of loved ones. Since then, he has been a friend, spiritual preceptor, a source of limitless generosity. May it be the Lord's will that one day I would visit Rishikesh and sit at the Master's feet.

When a letter arrives from Rishikesh, how uplifted becomes my spirit, how high soar aspirations, how strong grows resolve. The path is thorny. Hindrances of body and environment are many. One falls far short of adequate aspirations. steps falter, the mind hesitates, but always the

beloved saint is there to give encouragement, guidance, strength, divine love. Never again is one lost. It is such saints as Swamiji who prove the living truth of "THOU ART THAT."

The Divine Life Society has been functioning in Ottawa for two years. Though we are few in number at present, the role of the Society is important, in renewing us spiritually, in expanding the feeling of love and service towards all, of God in all. In the West, there is today a great hunger for these teachings, which embrace everyone, without regard to colour or creed. The Divine Life Society, through the Master at Rishikesh, is the fountain-head of all these.

May the day fast approach when the Branches of the Society will spread everywhere. May the holy saint, Swami Sivananda, continue to guide it, until it grows into a vast tree, its branches covering the entire world, bringing enlightenment to all as the Bodhi tree did to Lord Buddha.

Thou Art The All, My Master!

(Sri Sivananda Margarita, Switzerland)

Verily, thou art the light
In this dark world,
Verily, thou art the guide
In this misled world;
Thou art the radiant ideal, indeed.

In ugliness appears to me thy loveliness,
In evil I discover thy infinite bounty,
Jealous people recall me thy generosity,
Disappointments remind me
Thy unchanging truth.

In midst ignorance, I perceive thy wisdom,
In midst cruelty, I grasp thy Ahimsa,
In midst sensuality, I admire thy purity,
In midst ill-will, I glimpse thy glory.

In injury, I think of thy regardfulness;
In enmity, I think of thy forgiveness;

In confusion, I think of thy steadfastness;
In weakness, I think of thy strength.

Amidst suffering and slander,
I see thy moving, tender smile;
Behind all this bitter world-experience,
Ever beckons me thy loving heart.

In the transitoriness of pain and joy,
Ever remains the ideal of thy perfection,
Ever remain my gratitude and adoration
For all that which thou art.

Thou art the ideal of our adoration,
All veneration and loving affection,
Thou art the only true
Friend and guide and benefactor,
Thou art security, safety,
Masterful authority,
Messenger of God Almighty.

IMPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE TO THE GURU

(Sri K. Kamalan, Hong Kong)

Although it is hard to describe in words about our dearest Guru, yet I would try to state a few of my feelings which may sound strange to those who have not yet been in contact with him.

I am in touch with my holy Master since 1956. Words are too feeble to describe my deep feeling of reverence and gratitude towards him, for his mysterious ways of guidance. Only one who is in contact with him can fully perceive how wonderful and peaceful the relationship is between the Guru and the disciple.

In a mysterious way, the living divinity gives his devotees lessons to know the truth and methods to discipline themselves, under his protective guidance. He leads us step by step towards divinity and God-realization.

Through all the stress and strain of life in this world, we hope that the realized sage, Swami Sivananda, our Guru, may continue to lead us safely across the Samsara.

Practice of Meditation

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

The intellectual giant, the mighty leader, the heroic soldier and the great saint, are all human beings. What they have done, you can also do. IF—and it is a big IF—you can discipline the mind, concentrate its rays (powers) and meditate or apply them to an ideal with a singleness of purpose.

That is what the Yogi does when he meditates. He is full of energy, he has wonderful personal magnetism, he enjoys great powers of healing and blessing—because he meditates. When he has realized his oneness with God or the Self within, in Samadhi, he radiates divine light and peace. In his presence, your miseries vanish and your doubts are dispelled. Samadhi is the culmination of meditation.

But, do not forget that meditation itself is the seventh rung in the ladder of Yoga. Yoga is a perfect scientific system expounded by Patanjali Maharshi. It is open to all, and is not hedged in by religious or sectarian dogmas. Everyone can and should practise meditation. In fact, the supermen in all walks of life do meditate: their devotion to their chosen task makes it natural and effortless for them to meditate. The spiritual aspirant whose aim is to attain salvation should, however, practise meditation, consciously, willingly, and purposefully. He should also pay attention to the first six rungs in the ladder of Yoga.

PREPARATORY STAGES

The first two relate to your conduct. The impure mind will refuse to yield to the weak will. It will go its own way. The pure mind is a greater conductor of the will, and will faithfully guide you to

the inner realms of knowledge, power, bliss and peace. Purity is essential. Yama and Niyama, the first two rungs, purify the mind. Be truthful. Love all. Be pure. Do not covet others' wealth; be charitable, do not hoard wealth (hoarding tantamounts to stealing). Do not beg or put yourself under obligation to others; be contented with what you have. Observe the laws of cleanliness. Develop contentment. Lead a simple life. Study scriptures and repeat God's names. Do total self-surrender to God and earn His grace. These are the Yama-Niyamas.

The third step is Asana. Any comfortable and firm posture is Asana. You must be able to sit for a long time in this posture. Padmasana helps you in this.

PADMASANA: Sit and stretch the legs forward. Take hold of the right foot with the two hands and folding the leg at the knee, place the foot on the left thigh. Similarly, fold the left leg and place it on the right thigh. Keep the body erect and place the hands between the heels, one over the other or on the knees with Chinmudra.

If the posture is easy, steady and comfortable, then you are able to forget the body soon. The fourth step is Pranayama or the control of breath. Breath is intimately connected with the mind. When you are deeply thinking, you breathe slowly, rhythmically. When you are disturbed in thought, the breath is also disturbed, heavy and laboured. Even so, if you breathe in and out, steadily, rhythmically and deeply, the thought-process is slowed down and the mind is concentrated easily. Breathe in deeply, rhythmically, without producing noise, through the left nostril, closing the right one. Hold the breath for a

few seconds. Then breathe out through the right. Now breathe in through the right nostril, retain and breathe out through the left. This is one round. A few rounds will enable you to get the meditative mood.

When the mind does not run here and there, the next step—Pratyahara or withdrawal of the mind from external objects—becomes easy. Repetition of God's name helps in this. Visualization of the image of God, in the heart, also helps. The mind should be tempted to flow inward. If it is given a name and a form *within*, it will be busy with them and will not wander.

The rays of the mind thus withdrawn from external objects should be concentrated on the image of God within. This is Dharana. Till you acquire a certain amount of mastery over the mind, it is good to sit in front of an image of God, idol or picture, and look at it with a steady gaze, and at the same time repeating the name associated with the deity, mentally. When the mind is steadied, close the eyes and visualize the image in the heart. Let the mental repetition of the name go on. If the mind tries to wander now, give it some work to do! With every repetition of the name, offer a flower (mentally) at the feet of the Lord. The mind thus engaged, will not run.

Meditation follows concentration. Meditation culminates in Samadhi. The man who attempts at concentration of mind is like one who stands outside the palace and looks at it with one-pointed mind. Meditation is like entering this mansion. You roam about in the palace, but all the time remaining within it. You know all the inner secrets of the palace. Samadhi is like the discovery of the meditator that he is himself the King, the owner of the palace! It is the end of the search.

GOD, THE ONLY GOAL

This process (concentration-meditation-Samadhi) will reveal the hidden truth, the inner secrets, of anything. It will give you wonderful mental, intellectual and psychic powers. But do not be misguided by them. Your goal is far higher—salvation. Let your meditation be on God and God alone.

As soon as you sit for your daily practice of concentration and meditation, chant some hymns in praise of God. Repeat Om deeply a few times. Drive away sleep or lethargy by Pranayama. Then begin repeating the name of the Lord with the eyes fixed on His picture. Let the picture become a living presence to you. Speak to God. Pray to Him. Ask for His grace. Then close the eyes and visualize the picture in the heart. Worship Him there. Concentrate. Meditate. Commune with God.

Persevere in the practice. Never miss a day. Keep a room apart for this purpose: the meditative atmosphere will be built up in it. The moment you enter it, you will want to meditate. Set apart a particular period.

At the same time, pay attention to the cultivation of the virtues (Yama-Niyama). The lesser the craving you have for sensual pleasures and the lesser your attachment to worldly objects, the deeper will be your meditation and the sooner will you attain God-realization.

HOW TO BEGIN

As soon as you get up in the morning (at 4 a.m.), have a quick wash of the face and mouth, or a quick bath if this is feasible. The most important thing is that the Brahmanuhurta (4 to 6 a.m.) should be spent in meditation and in no other activity. Sit in front of your Ishta Devata.

Recite the following morning prayers.
(Those who recite similar other morning
prayers, may continue to do so.)

प्रातः स्मरामि हृदि संस्फुरदात्मतत्त्वं
सच्चिदसुखं परमहंसगतिं तुरीयम् ।
यस्त्वनृजागरसुषुप्तमवैति नित्यं
तद्ब्रह्म निष्कलमहं न च भूतसंघः ॥

In the early hours of the morning, I think of the Self, which shines in the chambers of my heart, which is of the nature of existence-knowledge-bliss absolute, which is the goal of the Paramahamsas (saints) and which is the fourth state of consciousness. I am that Brahman which is qualityless and eternal, beyond the three states of consciousness—waking, dreaming and deep sleep; and I am not composed of the elements.

प्रातर्भजामि मनसो वचसामगम्यं
वाचो विभान्ति निखिला यदनुग्रहेण ।
यं 'नेति-नेति' वचनैर्निगमा अवाचु-
स्तं देवदेवमजमन्युतमादुराचम्य ॥

In the early hours of the morning, I adore Him who is the God of gods, who is beyond the reach of mind and speech, and by whose grace alone speech is illuminated, whom the scriptures describe by the 'not this, not this' formula, who is unborn, unshakable and the primordial Being.

प्रातर्नमामि तमसः परमर्कवर्णं
पूर्णं सनातनपदं पुरुषोत्तमाख्यम् ।
यस्मिन्निदं जगदशेषमशेषमूर्त्तौ
रज्ज्वां भुजंगम इव प्रतिभासितं वै ॥

In the early hours of the morning, I bow down to that Being who is beyond darkness, who is of the brilliance of the sun, who is full, eternal, and in whom this universe appears as a rope mistaken for a snake.

श्लोकत्रयमिदं पुण्यं लोकत्रयविभूषणम् ।
प्रातःकाले पठेद्यस्तु स गच्छेत्परमं पदम् ॥

He who reads these verses, which are auspicious, the ornament of the three worlds, attains to the supreme state (of Self-realization).

PEACE CHANTS

Then recite the following Shanti Mantras. They ward off all the obstacles caused by the internal or environmental factors.

ॐ शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः । शं नो भवत्वयमा । शं न
इन्द्रो बृहस्पतिः । शं नो विष्णुरुक्मः । नमो ब्रह्मणे ।
नमस्ते वायो । त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि । त्वामेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्म
वदिष्यामि । श्रुतं वदिष्यामि । सत्यं वदिष्यामि । तन्मा-
मवतु । तद्वक्तारमवतु । अवतु माम् । अवतु वक्तारम् ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

May Mitra, Varuna and Aryama be good to us. May Indra and Brihaspati and Vishnu of great strides, be good to us. Prostrations to the Brahman. Prostrations to thee, O Vayu, who art the visible Brahman. I shall proclaim thee as visible Brahman. I shall call thee the just and the true. May He protect the teacher and me. May He protect the teacher. Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

ॐ सह नावतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं कर-
वावहे । तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहे ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

May He protect us both (the teacher and the taught). May He cause us both to enjoy the bliss of liberation. May we both exist to find out the true meaning of the scriptures. May our studies be fruitful. May we never quarrel with each other. Let there be three-fold peace.

ODES TO SUPREME GURU

Then, think of your Guru and mental-

THE COSMIC SYMBOL



A Symbol of Brahman, OM is the root of all sounds, the source of cosmic vibration, which gives shape to all creations, which is the basis of the three qualities of nature, and which is the mother of all languages. The students of Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga practise concentration on this symbol and meditate on the attributes associated with it.

SERVE

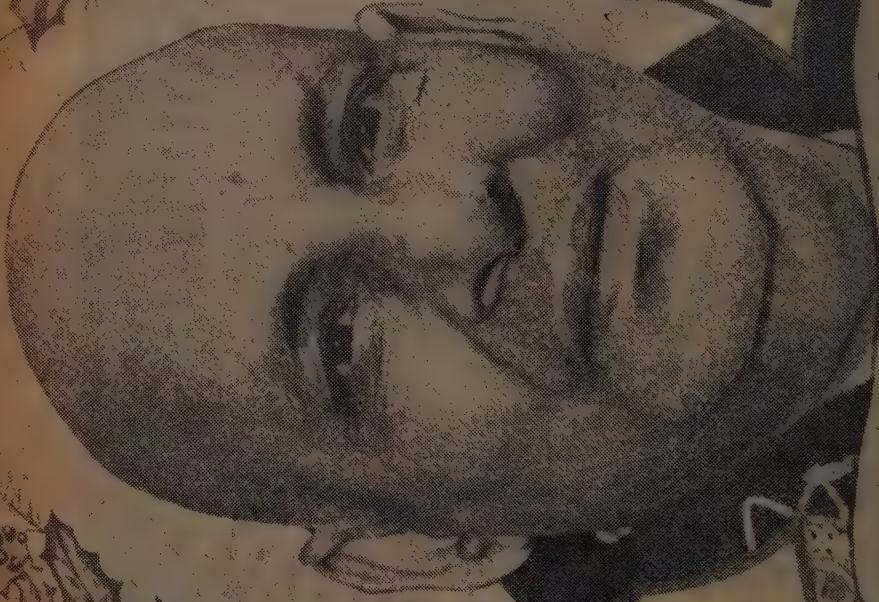
LOVE

GIVE

PURIFY

MEDITATE

REALISE



Tat T wam Asi

ly prostrating to him, recite the following hymns in praise of the preceptor:

ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्तिं
द्वन्द्वातीतं गगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम् ।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वभोसाक्षिभूतं
भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्गुरुं तं नमामि ॥

I prostrate myself before that Guru, the Existence, devoid of the three qualities, beyond comprehension, the witness of all mental functions, changeless and pure, one and eternal, transcending the pairs of the opposites, expansive like the sky, reachable through the utterance like 'thou art That,' who is the bliss of Brahman, the giver of supreme happiness, the mass of absolute wisdom.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुर्गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।
गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

Guru is Brahma. Guru is Vishnu. Guru is Siva. Guru is the supreme Brahman itself. Prostrations to that Guru.

अज्ञानतमिरान्धस्य ज्ञानाञ्जनशलाकया ।
चक्षुरुन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

Prostrations to that Guru who, through the collyrium of knowledge, opens the eye of him who is blinded by the gloom of ignorance.

ध्यानमूलं गुरोर्मूर्तिः पूजामूलं गुरोः पदम् ।
मन्त्रमूलं गुरोर्वाक्यं मोक्षमूलं गुरोः कृपा ॥

The form of Guru is the root of meditation. The feet of Guru are the root of worship. The teaching of Guru is the root of all Mantras. The grace of Guru is the root of salvation.

ॐ नमः शिवाय गुरवे सच्चिदानन्दमूर्तये ।
निष्पञ्चाय शान्ताय निरालम्बाय तेजसे ॥

Prostrations to the Guru, Siva, the essence of Satchidananda, worldless, peaceful, supportless and effulgent.

KIRTAN

After this, sing the following Kirtans in a low tone:

Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha
Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam
Sri Ganesha Sri Ganesha
Sri Ganesha Raksha Mam.
Jaya Saraswati Jaya Saraswati
Jaya Saraswati Pahi Mam
Sri Saraswati Sri Saraswati
Sri Saraswati Raksha Mam.
Saravanabhava Saravanabhava
Saravanabhava Pahi Mam
Subramanya Subramanya
Subramanya Raksha Mam.
Jaya Guru Siva Guru Hari Guru Ram
Jagad Guru Param Guru Sat Guru Shyam.
Adi Guru Advaita Guru Ananda Guru Om
Chit Guru Chidghana Guru
Chinmaya Guru Om.
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare.
Namah Sivaya Namah Sivaya
Namah Sivaya
Namah Sivaya Namah Sivaya
Namah Sivaya.
Dattatreya Dattatreya
Dattatreya Pahi Mam
Dattaguru Dattaguru
Dattaguru Raksha Mam.
Anjaneya Anjaneya Anjaneya Pahi Mam
Hanumanta Hanumanta
Hanumanta Raksha Mam.
Ganga Rani Ganga Rani
Ganga Rani Pahi Mam
Bhagirathi Bhagirathi
Bhagirathi Raksha Mam.
Om Tat Sat Om Tat Sat Om Tat Sat Om
Om Shanti Om Shanti Om Shanti Om.

JAPA

Then chant Om deeply for a few minutes. The vibrations of the holy Pranava

(Om) should fill the entire chest! Listen to the sound with one-pointed mind. Feel that the sound emanates from the heart or the navel. Feel that the sound fills your whole being. In order to achieve this, the sound must be deep and vibrant. If, at the same time, you attune the mind to the sound, it will very quickly calm down. Another important factor to be borne in mind is that the Pranava must be uttered with a long (o) MMMM, the M-sound gradually fading out in the heart. It is this that will fix the mind in the heart.

In the same tone, repeat your Ishta Mantra pertaining to the form of meditation. Say it aloud (at an audible pitch and not louder!) for a couple of minutes. All the time, keep steadily looking at the picture of your Ishta Devata (tutelary deity) kept in front of you. Then, 'whisper' the Mantra for a few minutes. The most important point is that the inner sense-organ of hearing should be tuned to hear the sound of the Mantra *within*, and the eyes should continue to look at the picture steadily. Now while the eyes are still open, visualize with the inner sense-organ of sight, the picture of the Ishta Devata, in the heart. As the mind is already introverted by listening to the Mantra-sound within, this visualization also will become easy with a little persistent practice. When you are able to visualize the image of God within your heart clearly, then the concentration would have been completely shifted inward. You will want to keep the eyes closed. Close them and continue the Japa mentally.

Throughout this process, associate the Mantra-repetition with the breath. Split the Mantra into two, repeating the one half while breathing in, and the other half while breathing out. For instance, if the Mantra is *Om Namō Narayanaya*, while breathing in say (mentally) *Om Namō* and

while breathing out say *Narayanaya*. If the association is persistently practised, the breath itself will take up the Japa and continue it day and night.

Japa itself will lead to meditation. The Lord's grace will give you success in meditation, leading to Samadhi.

OTHER DETAILS

If evil thoughts enter the mind, do not pay any attention to them. Let them depart, as uninvited guests will, if totally ignored! Go on with your Japa, visualizing the Lord in the heart. If the mind wanders, resort to mental worship, or open your eyes again and gaze at the image in front.

It is very important to see that the body and mind are relaxed. There should be no tension anywhere. The posture of the body should be steady but not tense. The mind should be concentrated on the form with ease; otherwise, every extraneous thought entering the mind will also get fixed there! Let go your hold on the world and gently hold on to the feet of the Lord.

In the initial stages of meditation, it is possible that as soon as the mind is concentrated and you begin to do Japa, something you had forgotten will be recollected by the mind. If it pertains to the business of the day, the mind will be distracted. It is, therefore, advisable (in the initial stages) to keep a piece of paper and pencil by your side and note these down, so that the mind may be reassured that it will not be forgotten again and that it could go on with the Japa. Use your commonsense in overcoming such obstacles.

On no account should you give up the morning meditation and get up from your seat before the appointed time; if the mind knows you are a hard taskmaster, it will meekly obey you!

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

At the close of the practice, offer the following universal prayer to the Lord before getting up from your seat:

*O adorable Lord of mercy and love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art omnipresent,
Omnipotent, omniscient.
Thou art Satchidananda.
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.
Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength,
To resist temptation and
To Control the mind.
Free us from egoism,
Lust, greed and hatred.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.
Let us behold Thee
In all these names and forms.
Let us serve Thee
In all these names and forms.
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy glories.
Let Thy name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.*

Now pray for the health, happiness, peace and well-being of all:

*Om Sarvesham Svastir Bhavatu
Sarvesham Shantir Bhavatu
Sarvesham Purnam Bhavatu
Sarvesham Mangalam Bhavatu.
Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah
Sarve Santu Niramayah
Sarve Bhadrani Pasyantu
Ma Kaschit Dukkha Bhag Bhavet.
Asato Ma Sat Gamaya
Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya
Mrityor Ma Amritam Gamaya.
Om Purnamadah Purnamidam
Purnat Purnamudachyate
Purnasya Purnamadaya*

*Purnamevavasishyate.
Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.*

DAILY LIFE

It is most important that the return to the work-a-day world should be gradual. After you open your eyes, take at least five minutes to get up from the seat, all the time continuing the Japa. Even afterwards, slowly walk around the room, repeating the Mantra, for another five minutes. Then come out of the room.

Even during the day, when possible, close your eyes, withdraw the mind from the world, repeat your Ishta Mantra and meditate upon God, just for a few seconds. Keep up the current!

Self-control or control of the senses and mind, is the indispensable requisite to successful meditation. Mind can be controlled only by Abhyasa (systematic practice) and Vairagya (dispassion towards worldly objects). Remember Sri Krishna's note of warning in the *Gita*:

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चेकान्तमनश्नतः ।
न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥

Yoga (meditation) is not for one who eats much, not for one who does not eat; neither for one who sleeps much, nor for one who does not sleep.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥

Yoga destroys the miseries of one who is moderate in eating, etc., and in work, sleep and wakefulness.

Therefore:

*Eat a little, drink a little.
Talk a little, sleep a little,
Mix a little, move a little,
Serve a little, rest a little,
Work a little, give a little,*

*Study a little, worship a little,
Do Asan a little, Pranayam a little,
Reflect a little, meditate a little,
Do Japa a little, Kirtan a little,
Write Mantra a little,
Have Satsang a little.*

Progress in meditation will be rapid if you thus lead a well-regulated life and practise the Yoga of synthesis. Combine Hatha Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga. You will have integral development. Without God's and

Guru's grace you cannot enter into deep meditation. Therefore, never give up Japa and worship. Maintain good health through the regular practice of a few Asanas (Sirshasan, Sarvangasan, etc.) and Suryanamaskaras. Selfless service of humanity will enable you to gauge your progress in the practice of meditation. If the meditation was deep, you will be filled with compassion and spirit of selfless service, and experience the presence of God in all. BE GOOD, DO GOOD. May God bless you!

AN ODE TO SIVANANDA

(Sri Swami Jyotirmayananda)

OM.....OM.....OM.....OM
His books came as silver clouds
And rained a shower of gold,
From thoughts winging over earth,
To touch the hearts of bold.
Peace on earth, goodwill to men,
Sivananda.....glorious King,
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear thy voice ring.
OM.....OM.....OM.....OM

His songs ring through silvery skies
With thoughtful wings unfurled,
And streams of heavenly music float
Over all the weary world,
And slowly spreading thy glory,

Yea, Atmic songs they sing,
Long live the books of Sivananda,
The threads of heart doth sing.
OM.....OM.....OM.....OM

His compassion shines in silvery skies
With milky light arrayed,
And beams of cooling love spring
From the moon that shines as gold,
And radiant life exults in bliss,
The heavenly angels sing—
Long live the Sage Sivananda,
Victory to our glorious King! !
OM.....OM.....OM.....OM

[Soloist: Swami Lalitananda. Music from: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"]

IN THE MEMORY OF GURUDEV

An old friend of Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri A. Ramaswami, writes from Johore-Bahru, Malaya:

"The woods around the Johore sea-shore still continue to speak of the glories of Gurudev in silence, as it were. The places that have been touched by his divine feet are regarded by his devotees as Punya Bhumi (meritorious grounds). I have a great desire to build a temple in memory of Gurudev on the sea-shore of Johore-Bahru."

What We Learn From Sivananda's Life and Sadhana

(*"Kausik"*)

Authoritative, ancient scriptures are there in plenty, and many learned men, too, claim to lead the seekers efficiently on the spiritual path; necessary facilities are found in the sacred places in India, where people could devote themselves to Sadhana; and, also, sincere efforts are not lacking among the seekers, at least in their early stages of Sadhana. And yet, out of millions, how many have attained the ultimate goal in their spiritual quest? The cause of the poor result should be thoroughly investigated by every sincere student.

Instead of spending the whole of one's life-time in experiments, struggles, trials and frustration, for the sake of attaining peace and perfection through study of scriptures, or in courting troubles and even dangers to life by attempting difficult Yoga practices, I find the safest and the easiest way is to follow in the foot-steps of a perfected soul.

NEED FOR CHOOSING A GUIDE

Where to search for a perfected soul? Swami Sivananda writes in one of his books: "It is a very difficult problem, indeed. Among Yogis and Mahatmas, it is extremely difficult to spot out the perfect soul from merely their external ways, food habits, the mode of work or speech or dress. It is, therefore, advisable for one to come in close contact with some of the great and experienced men, study them closely as far as possible, and then stick with leech-like tenacity to a saint who is willing to take a keen interest in one's welfare, progress and evolution. All scriptures, sages, saints and prophets of the past greatly emphasize the importance of a Guru. The protecting care of a Guru is in itself a

real strength and hope to one for success in life."

It will be of absorbing interest to study Swami Sivananda's life and his method of Sadhana. It is safe to follow his simple lessons, because his teachings are entirely based on his rich, personal experiences. The lessons are nicely graded to suit the various stages in the student's evolution, and his taste and aptitude. Hence an attempt is made here to explain briefly the rigorous and intense way in which Swamiji plunged himself into Sadhana, and the lessons he continues to teach to the world through his life and actions.

People all over the world hear the clarion voice of Swami Sivananda: "I live to serve you all. I live to make you all happy. Do not tarry. Come, come! Attain the goal of life, Self-realization. Become a dynamic Yogi." We often hear these sweet and encouraging words from the corner of the Himalayas, where he lives. Indeed, they bring a life-transforming hope to the aspirants who are groping in the darkness of ignorance.

MEDICAL CAREER

Born in South India, Swami Sivananda received his education in the medical line. His biographies say that he was highly intelligent. He had a pushing nature. He was active and ambitious. He sailed for Malaya in 1913. For a period of ten years he practised medicine there, and became very popular locally. He had a good practice. His generosity, kindness and sympathy brought him glory and fame.

He was not enamoured of transitory glory, comfort and luxury. It is clear that he paid more attention to the welfare of his patients than in consolidating his per-

sonal interests. During his prosperous career in Malaya, Swami Sivananda did not entangle himself by multiplying his family cares, worries and responsibilities. The moment he felt the urge for a higher life, he left Malaya for India, in 1923. For a short period, he undertook a pilgrimage all over India. During his travels as a spiritual seeker, he had Darshan of many Mahatmas, learnt useful lessons from them and had wonderful experiences. He continued the pilgrimage until he found a suitable place with some facility for utilizing his whole time in intense Sadhana.

WHY SECLUSION?

Swami Sivananda says: "The world is the best teacher. Evolve through work. Self-realization in and through the world is the central teaching of the Gita." But Swamiji is aware of the difficulties and obstacles the Sadhak faces in the worldly atmosphere. He knows very well how sincere aspirants struggle hard for years in developing a virtue and in being regular in prayer and meditation.

With full sympathy, Swamiji gives a new hope to the aspirants: "Obstacles are many for a sincere Sadhak. Maya is powerful. Self-realization in and through the world is easier said than done. It sounds all-right. It is feasible only for a born Yogi, one in a million, but not possible for the vast majority. Joining an Ashram or living in seclusion, far away from worldly environments, will be like entering a university for continuation of higher studies. Without much effort you can enter into deep meditation in a place charged with spiritual vibrations. Company of Mahatmas will have an elevating influence."

WHY RISHIKESH?

Some thirty years ago, Rishikesh was predominantly a township of Mahatmas,

Yogis and Sadhaks. They were living in Dharmasalas (normally travellers' inns, where they could stay free of charge, built by philanthropists). Also the aspirants had facilities to put up thatched-cottages in any secluded place here. In Swarg-Ashram (a public-trust colony of Mahatmas), two miles away from Rishikesh, there are several small, secluded, single or double-roomed houses, in parallel lines, for a distance of nearly a mile, with trees or grooves between each Kutir (house). Arrangements are made by the Kalikambliwala Kshetra (alms-house) to provide mid-day and evening meals for the Mahatmas.

At Rishikesh, too, we have another Kalikambliwala Kshetra, Punjab-Sindh Kshetra and Nepali Kshetra, to supply meals for the Mahatmas at noon and in the evening. The climate is neither extremely hot in summer, nor very cold in winter. The scenery all around lends a great charm to the place and soothes the aching heart of man. Sadhaks can enjoy peace, unless they deliberately want to be disturbed, and devote all their time and energy in Sadhana. The greatest attraction is the holy Ganga.

When Swamiji arrived here, in 1924, there were no electricity, loudspeakers and radios-sets to disturb the Sadhaks. Even today conveyances such as Tongas (horse-carts), buses, trucks and cars are not found in that peaceful spot, Swarg-Ashram, (for there is yet no bridge across the Ganga for vehicular traffic). Householders rarely stayed there on those days. They used to come from Haridwar to have Darshan of the Mahatmas and hear their advice. In Swarg-Ashram there were no facilities for family people to live.

Swami Sivananda considered Swarg-Ashram an ideal spot for a life of contemplation, and settled down there. He received initiation from Swami Viswananda, and

spent a period of eight years in and around Swarg-Ashram, doing intense Sadhana.

ASPIRANT'S QUALIFICATIONS

In the *Practice of Yoga*, published in 1928, five years after his coming to Swarg-Ashram, Swami Sivananda says: "The goal of life, Self-realization, is attained by those who have the basic qualifications such as Viveka (discrimination) Vairagya (dispassion), Shatsampat (six-fold virtues) and Mumukshutva (desire for liberation). The aspirant should try to possess all divine qualities and destroy the evil traits in him. Through introspection and self-analysis, he should trace out the defects in him and try to remove them by steady cultivation of their opposite virtues and practice of prayer and meditation. He must have a thorough control over his senses and mastery over his mind. He must have a sound knowledge of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Upanishads*, *Yoga-Vasishtha*, *Vivekachudamani*, *Avadhoota-Gita*, *Panchadasi*, *Vicharasagara* and the *Yoga-Sutras* of Patanjali. He should have Sat-sanga (holy company), Sravana (hearing of the scriptural lore), Manana (reflection thereon), and Chitta Suddhi (purification of the heart) by selfless service to mankind.

"Such an earnest aspirant, with strong will-power, vitality, purity and a subtle intellect, can begin regular meditation in the morning and evening and increase the period gradually to three hours in one sitting within the first year of Sadhana, while trying to keep up the divine consciousness throughout the day. He should possess a balanced state of mind under all conditions. He should be free from Raga-Dwesha (likes and dislikes) and pleasure and pain. He should have a new vision and inner spiritual strength."

Realizing the difficulties and obstacles the aspirants have to face in developing the above qualifications, Swamiji says: "You can, without much effort, attain the above qualifications when you live in the company of Mahatmas, in a place charged with spiritual vibrations, and progress well in your study of the scriptures and prayer and meditation."

DRAWBACKS

In the past it was comparatively easier to find many Mahatmas, Yogis and learned seekers in Swarg-Ashram, Rishikesh and Haridwar. There they were free from worldly atmosphere unlike now. Pious householder-devotees visited these places to have Darshan of Mahatmas, seek their guidance and have the benefit of their holy company. They went from Kutir to Kutir in search of good Mahatmas and Yogis, and gave them fruits and clothes. They also financed any charitable cause if the Mahatmas so desired.

The alms-houses gave food only to those who wore orange-coloured robes or to the Vairagis with matted-locks and long beards. The good Mahatmas spent their time profitably in individual Sadhana or study of the scriptures. There were, however, another type of Sadhus who did not have the requisite qualifications, or adequate aspiration in the spiritual line, and yet who were in a way devoted to mendicant life, but could not make the best use of the facilities found here. They had no fixed purpose in Sadhana, but only gossiped on world-problems or wandered about aimlessly and wasted their time and energy. They took pleasure in having their own group of friends, grew attractive beards and put on costly orange-coloured robes.

In groups, they used to visit sacred places like Mount Kailas in Tibet, Amarnath in Kashmir, Banaras, Puri, Ramesh-

war, Mathura, Vrindaban, Gangotri, Kedar-nath and Badrinath, and tempted new aspirants to their wandering mode of life. Many new Sadhaks also, at times, spoiled their health by over-exertion and want of proper diet, when some great Hatha Yogis trained them in difficult Yoga practices.

Thus we find that, in spite of the facilities for food and stay, of holy company and saintly guidance, and a congenial place for Sadhana, quite a few of the aspirants could not make any substantial progress in the spiritual path.

RIGHT ATTITUDE

Swami Sivananda gives the solution here: "Do not be carried away by temptations of Yogic powers, wandering life, and name and fame. Utilize every moment of your life in doing something useful and in Sadhana. Rotate the routine of five or six items such as study, meditation, Japa, simple Yoga exercises, a little selfless service, and Bhajan and Kirtan. Do not think much of the body, bread or beard. Do not wander about aimlessly. Use your common-sense at every step. Give up distracting company. Do not mix much. Observe Mowna and be moderate in speech. Live alone. Introspect. Crush all desires and cravings.

"Adapt and adjust. If vegetables are not available take a little of *dal* (pulse) more. Do not grumble if you do not get milk or fruit. Have strict control over your tongue. Give up salt and sugar for some time, to practise self-control. Have discipline of all the senses. Do not find fault with the place, person or climate. Give up the complaining habit. Be accommodative to all circumstances. You cannot have a place where you will get every facility and comfort. In all places you will have some facilities as well as some difficulties.

For one convenience there may be another inconvenience. Give up the wandering habit. Do not compare places. Put up with little drawbacks. Be satisfied with whatever you get. Be systematic in your prayer and meditation. Have a definite plan and programme of life. Do not think of the past. Do not scheme."

Thus Swamiji used to impress his students untiringly from the very beginning and closely observe their ways and habits for giving them necessary guidance according to their make-up, while taking great care of their spiritual progress. This is a unique feature in Swamiji, in training his students, disregarding whether they possessed adequate qualifications or not, whereas other teachers generally give lessons to their disciples in the same lines in which they have proficiency, and if deserving.

OBSTACLES FROM WITHIN

Again Swamiji continues: "Formidable obstacles and difficulties arise from within." This is experienced by all students when they advance in concentration and meditation. Swamiji refers to the old desires, cravings and accumulated impressions in the subconscious. Though he says that it is difficult to fight the internal enemies, yet he emphatically declares that it is not difficult for those who are sincere and take care to acquire the necessary qualifications, cultivate a strong will, purity of heart and a genuine desire for liberation, and those who are fortunate to have the support and guidance of a perfected soul.

Swamiji encourages his students thus: "If you eradicate one defect or evil quality, you will acquire enough strength and will-power to conquer the other defects, one by one. If you develop one virtue to a full extent, all other virtues will cling to you, one by one. What is most essential is since-

rity. Steadfastness and diligent application, strictness with the mind and a rational understanding, will help you to overcome all obstacles."

Personally I feel that obstacles and difficulties vanish if a person is lucky enough to be at the feet of a perfected soul for a sufficient duration and follow the lessons given by him to the full extent. To be under the protection, guidance and supervision of a mighty spiritual agency, a Guru, is itself a sufficient assurance for a true seeker for success. Without much conscious effort, the aspirants derive spiritual benefit in a mysterious way. The company and the blessings of a great Mahatma by themselves constitute an elevating influence.

IN SWARG-ASHRAM

Swami Sivananda shut himself up in a small Kutir on the left bank of the Ganga at Swarg-Ashram, as already said, for eight years, and spent all his time and energy in intense, steady and systematic Sadhana. I can give you a rough idea of his daily routine on those days. It should be noted here that even today, while remaining amidst hundreds of devotees and managing the affairs of a world-wide organization, the Divine Life Society, he sticks to the same pattern of routine, though in a less intense way.

As soon as he got up in Brahmamuhurta (4 a.m.), he did a few Pranayamas and Asanas to drive off drowsiness. Then he began prayer, Japa and meditation which he continued till 8 a.m. He did not waste the precious morning hours in any other way, even in going out for walks. After nearly four hours of meditation, he wrote some lessons on Sadhana, from his own experiences, or short letters to aspirants

in far off places, or a few articles for publication in journals such as *Kalyan Kalpataru*, *My Magazine*, etc. (on those days he had no magazines of his own), the titles of such articles, published serially, being "Mind, Its Mysteries and Control" and "Spiritual Lessons." Till 10 or 11 in the morning, Swamiji used to be busy with his writing work and then go to the Kshetra, half a mile away, to bring his meals.

While returning from the Kshetra, he used to buy a small quantity of milk and curd from the shop. After leaving his food in the Kutir, he would visit the sick and old Mahatmas to distribute the curd and milk he had bought. (He had a little money of his own for this purpose and also for buying writing materials.) Then he would take bath in the Ganga, by now mid-day, and hence he did not feel the necessity for hot water even during the winter months. After finishing his meals he posted letters to aspirants and despatched articles for the journals.

Apart from *Kalyan Kalpataru* and *My Magazine*, which published the serials by Swamiji entitled "Mind, Its Mysteries and Control" and "Spiritual Lessons," respectively, other journals, such as *Kalpa Vriksha*, *Bhakti*, *Vision*, *Peace*, *Sankirtan*, etc., also published his articles. The editors of these journals used to say that they had enough articles by Swamiji to last for the next three years. Such was the amount of work turned out by him through devoting about two hours of his time every day.

DISCIPLINED LIFE

In the afternoon, Swamiji spent an hour or two in the study of scriptures, and took down notes. His short notes are preserved in the SIVANANDA REGALIA, at the Ashram, along with heavy bundles of his

hand-written manuscripts. In the evening he had his usual brisk walk inside the compound of his Kutir. For some period Swamiji practised Swara Yoga, also. During his visits to the Kshetra at mid-day and during evening Walks, he combined deep-breathing exercises and mental Japa. From 7 p.m. till he retired to bed at about 10 p.m., Swamiji attended to his prayer and meditation. He never wrote, read or went out anywhere during the night. In between every kind of Sadhana, he adjusted rest and relaxation.

The Kshetra authorities and other Mahatmas directed the English-knowing pilgrims to Swami Sivanandaji's Kutir for Darshan. The frequent visits of the pilgrims affected his steady Sadhana. So, with the permission of the Kshetra management, he fixed up a barbed-wire fencing around his Kutir. At the entrance, there was a sign-board with the words: "Interviews between 4 and 5 p.m. ONLY FOR FIVE MINUTES EACH."

Even his own disciples were not permitted to visit his Kutir or meet him without a specific purpose. He never allowed his disciples to do any such service as even washing his clothes, sweeping his room or fetching water from the Ganga. He was not pleased when his students addressed him as "Sadguru" or when they touched his feet. It may appear funny,—the devotees in the past offered prostrations to the door or the wall before entering his Kutir. He directed his disciples to go from Kutir to Kutir and serve the old and sick Mahatmas, when they offered their services to him.

Swami Sivanandaji kept some allopathic medicines in a cup-board in his room and treated the sick. Some Mahatmas conducted classes on the *Yoga-Vasishtha*. In the evening hours Swamiji used to join

these classes and bring garlands for the lecturers. At the end of each class, he took pleasure in singing the Mahamantra Kir-tan and some Bhajans. Sometimes he entertained the audience with his favourite South Indian tunes. Occasionally he used to be away from his Kutir for several hours or a couple of days. During such occasions, he used to be somewhere in the Brahmapuri forest, or the Nilakantha hills, or Garuda Chatti, or on the sandy banks of the Ganga beyond Lakshmanjhula, and would spend his time in undisturbed meditation.

RESPECT FOR MAHATMAS

Swami Sivanandaji had great reverence and regard for all the advanced Mahatmas, then residing there or near about, among them Mahamandaleshwar Swami Vishnu-devanandaji, Swami Prempuriji, Swami Bhagawatanandaji, Swami Advaitanandaji, Swami Swayamjyotiji, Brahmachari Yoganandaji, Swami Tapovanamji, Swami Purushottamanandaji, Narayanswamiji (who used to wear only a piece of sac, and so was called Bori Narayanswamiji), Mata Omkareshwariji, Avadhoot Kesavanandaji, and other great Tapasvins (ascetics) and learned Mahatmas. Occasionally, he used to meet them for a few minutes. Swamiji always avoided unnecessary company and talk with anyone, even a great Mahatma.

Rich devotees sometimes gave feasts to all the Mahatmas at Rishikesh. They offered them clothes and also cash presents. Many Sadhus walked long distances to join such feasts, and would waste the whole day on each occasion. Swami Sivanandaji never thought of such feasts or presents. He was satisfied with the few *chapatis* (pan-cakes) he got from the Kshetra at mid-day. I never saw him going to the Kshetra in the evening. On some

days he did not go the Kshetra during mid-day also. He must have, on such occasions, managed with some old stock of breads, dried and kept for the next day.

Some of the learned Mahatmas managed to dispense with the Kshetra food. They started their own Ashrams and trained some students in Sanskrit, and led a comfortable life, with the help of devotees and pilgrims. Swami Sivanandaji had no idea of starting an Ashram or leading an easy life. On many occasions, he would warn the aspirants with the following words:

"Now-a-days the Sadhaks never care to look to their spiritual progress. They shave their heads, wear ochre-coloured clothes, remain at Rishikesh or Haridwar for some time, and then pass themselves as great Yogis. They begin to collect money to start their Ashrams, for leading a comfortable life. There are enough of Ashrams and mutts in India. Sincere selfless workers are rare. Ashrams become fighting centres. Before starting an Ashram, the founder should establish himself as an ideal for emulation. His very presence must give peace, power and bliss to all. Only then can one successfully run his institution. Only then will the public derive some spiritual benefit from such Ashrams."

STRESS ON ALL-ROUND SADHANA

Swamiji insisted that all aspirants should carry on their Sadhana intensely and also do dedicated service to the Mahatmas and Sadhus, the decrepit and the sick, as much as possible, without trying to earn money for the service thus rendered.

When his students would team up and waste their time in gossiping, he used to chide them thus, when he got a suitable

opportunity: "What is this giggling? What is this guffaw? You have taken a responsible garb. Do you feel your responsibility? Yogis smile through their eyes. Conserve your energy. Observe Mowna. Somehow you must devote six hours in meditation (in two sittings) and three hours in study every day. This is my method."

Swamiji never appreciated any one-sided development which is often noticed in many great Mahatmas at Rishikesh, Uttarkashi and Badrinath. He taught his students the method for a harmonious development. In this method no one would condemn any particular Sadhana or neglect any important aspect. Swamiji says:

"Have one line, either Bhakti, or Yoga, or Vedanta, as the main. But do not neglect the important aspects of the other lines. Combine all the necessary items in your daily routine, suitable to your needs, taste and constitution. Be vigilant. Use your commonsense at every step of your practice. Do not make frequent changes in Sadhana. Stick to one method, one place and one Guru. Be adamant and resolute. Develop patience. The fruit is immortality."

CAUTION TO ASPIRANTS

The aspirants usually think of their old friends and relatives if they become sick, and then leave the place chosen for Sadhana. Swamiji says: "Be adamant. Endure. Never budge an inch. Do not retrace your steps. Come out victorious from all trials and tribulations. Draw energy from within through Japa and prayer. Charge the body and the mind with spiritual vibrations. Take to Bhajan and Kir-tan. Think of God. He is the source of all strength. Have a firm resolve: 'I will give up my life in order to realize.' Have this kind of firm determination."

Swamiji warns the advanced students: "Do not stop your Sadhana when you get a few glimpses of light in meditation. Continue the Sadhana till you are established in the Bhuma (Infinite). If you stop Sadhana and roam about in the world, there is every likelihood of a downfall. The reaction will be terrible. Instances are not lacking. I seriously warn you on this point. Be steady till you can dwell in full Brahmic consciousness."

Swami Sivananda has a deep-rooted faith in the teachings of the sages, saints and prophets. While leading a strict and well-disciplined life in the path of renunciation, he never ignored any of the fundamental religious principles or traditional ritualistic customs as laid down in the ancient scriptures, though he was not particular about blindly following the observances and rules of the orthodox school in respect of food or dress. He was not keen in taking nutritious food, or living on nuts, milk and fruit, generally prescribed for Yogis, or in fasting for long periods.

WELL-BALANCED APPROACH

Swamiji had a naturally sturdy constitution, and was able to maintain a high standard of health through his virtuous life of purity, prayer and simple exercises. He had a fine proficiency in the different kinds of Sadhana—as in Hatha Yoga, Tantra Yoga, Raja Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. He kept his mind busy in study and Sadhana, and utilized his body as an instrument for serving the Mahatmas and the sick. He did not consider service, study, Pooja, repeating a Mantra, doing worship or Sadhana as a profession or a means to earn name and fame.

Swamiji paid no undue importance to the maintenance of a sound and healthy body, which usually engages the attention

of not a few, who wish to prolong their longevity. Nor did he completely ignore the laws of health, any violation of which would only mean disease and suffering. He never thought of growing an attractive, long beard or having a daily shave and keep up a fastidious appearance.

Swamiji, thus leading an ideal life of intense discipline for his own evolution and the benefit of the world, became a centre of attraction to the Yogis and Mahatmas, a reliable guide to seekers after truth, a friend of the poor, and a sympathetic doctor to the sick.

IMPEDIMENT TO THE MISSION

When Swami Sivanandaji made considerable progress in the spiritual path, the inborn desire in him to serve and help mankind prompted him to share his rich experiences and knowledge among the struggling aspirants, on a much wider scale. Being steady in his Sadhana, he managed to find time to publish instructive articles in various periodicals and get a few books on the practical side of Yoga, Bhakti and Vedanta printed through some publishers. Those who read the lessons of Swamiji in periodicals came in touch with him for further guidance.

If new aspirants, who come to the Himalayas with an earnest interest, are not properly guided, they fall into the traps of the lazy and aimlessly-wandering Sadhus, and ruin their lives. Swamiji, therefore, took a great interest in the new aspirants, gave them initiation and trained them in the right direction. He had to go personally and request the Kshetra management to provide food to such aspirants. Thus, day by day, their number was swelling.

The Kshetra was not keen to provide the boarding and lodging facilities for so

Kshetra management and fight for what we regarded as truth and justice. It was a great surprise to many that he quickly went to the Mahant (head of the Kshetra) to inform him that he had decided to leave Swarg-Ashram. The Mahant insisted that Swamiji should stay on (but perhaps with restriction on admitting new aspirants). He even offered to construct a fine bungalow, with all conveniences, for Swamiji's stay in seclusion. Swamiji replied: "The peace of Swarg-Ashram is disturbed. I will try some other place." The Mahant made loving enquiries as to the place where he would go. Swamiji replied: "I do not have any idea right now. Until I get a small Kutir, I will stay in the Ram Ashram Library (on the opposite bank)." That was a bold move. The year was 1934, after exactly ten years of his arrival at Rishikesh.

In search of light, knowledge and spiritual perfection, Swami Sivanandaji gave up his medical profession in Malaya and took to the life of renunciation in the Himalayas. Again, in the interest of the welfare of the seekers of truth, as a second sacrifice, he left Swarg-Ashram and elected to stay in a small room in the Ram Ashram Library. No one can fully describe the hardships undergone by him during that period due to such a sudden change. He had to walk to Rishikesh, a mile and a half away, in the hot summer sun, for his bread. He had to look after some of his students who followed him there.

NUCLEUS OF SIVANANDASHRAM

He welcomed many sincere aspirants and gave them tremendous encouragement on the spiritual path. He was bubbling with his usual joy and smile, and was as intent upon his daily Sadhana as before. In a short time, there were about twenty re-

nunciate-Sadhaks, staying in some of the rooms of a Dharmasala, adjacent to Ram Ashram Library, and depending on alms from the Kshetra at Rishikesh town. Whatever offerings were given by devotees, Swamiji spent in helping the aspirants with books such as *Gita* and *Upanishads* for their study, and in medical aid to the sick.

For some time, one old Sadhu brought Bhiksha (alms) from the Kshetra for Swamiji. Then a kitchen was started for preparing food for him. Then, by and by, one or two attendants of Swamiji started having their meals at this kitchen. In the course of two years, by the time the Divine Life Society was started, in 1936, disciples and devotees had their meals, twice a day, from this kitchen. Swamiji, while attending to his own Sadhana, trained the students in collective Sadhana.

Some of the householder-devotees, too, when visiting the Ashram, which was named 'Ananda Kutir,' joined the common prayer and meditation class in the morning, Satsanga in the evening, and participated in Sankirtan and Bhajan at night. The aspirants themselves did not show any enthusiasm in getting up in the early morning. But Swamiji used to chant loudly OM OM OM, SHYAM, SHYAM, SHYAM, at 4 a.m., to wake up the students. Sometimes he would enter some Kutirs at 4 a.m., to see if the aspirants were sleeping, and would personally round them up for common meditation.

PERSONAL TRAINING

At the end of the morning meditation class, Swamiji used to give inspiring lessons on concentration, meditation, control of mind and ethical perfection. He directed the aspirants to attend to the kitchen work such as washing vessels, bringing water

from the Ganga, cooking and serving food. They had also to study books, write short articles and give lectures at the evening Satsanga. Even the beginners were trained by Swamiji to give short discourses and sing Bhajans, and he would encourage them with such remarks as 'thrilling,' 'wonderful,' and so on.

He would prescribe books for study, one at a time, and one Sadhak would put questions and anyone else would be asked to reply. He introduced saltless diet once a week, fasting on Ekadasi days (once a fortnight) and occasional vigils such as on Sivaratri and Krishna-Janmashtami days. Swamiji himself would participate in all these features and activities. Rather, he was the first to be present in all the classes. He insisted that all the students should take down notes when lectures were given. The aspirants also received lessons on nursing the sick and treating simple ailments. He supplied them with some common medicines and asked them to visit occasionally the neighbouring villages, and treat the sick.

Some of the aspirants were trained to attend to the growing correspondence. They had also to pack and despatch books to devotees at different places. Some had to typewrite and take copies of Swamiji's articles and despatch them to magazines and newspapers. Swamiji made everyone learn Yogasanas, sing Bhajan and Kirtan, and conduct Satsanga. He had a natural habit of praising the aspirants sky-high and enthusing them in every way. Occasionally, Swamiji would be invited to preside over Sankirtan Conferences in the Punjab and the U.P. He carried on dynamic work during his hurricane tours for a week or two, established Branches of the Divine Life Society in some places, and quickly returned to Rishikesh.

It was while returning from one such tour, in 1936, from Lahore (now in Pakistan) that Swami Sivanandaji thought of carrying on the noble service in an organized manner at Rishikesh and other places. He alighted at Ambala, and with the help of an advocate, registered a Trust Deed by name the Divine Life Trust which is the parent body of the Divine Life Society. That was in 13th January, 1936. Swamiji did not work hard in collecting funds for developing the activities of the Society or enlarging the Ashram, but he gave enough opportunities for making the Divine Life Society a world-wide organization. He preferred a natural growth of the Society.

SECRET OF SUCCESS

Inspired by the powerful spiritual lessons that are given in the works of Swamiji, aspirants from all parts of India came to him for training in the path of Sadhana. There were, at first, inadequate arrangements for their boarding and lodging. Swamiji asked the newcomers to stay with any of the Ashramites, and adjust and adapt themselves to their new mode of life.

Seekers from distant lands, too, came, at first a few and then in large numbers, for getting training in Yoga and Vedanta. Those who came in contact with Swamiji felt a remarkable transformation taking place in them. They all wanted to stick to him. Swamiji was also keen in helping them to evolve and awaken their hidden faculties, and created different fields of service, suitable to their taste and temperament.

Swamiji closely observed their talents and capacities, and asked them to evolve through any form of service. He never forced anyone to do a particular kind of work, but was, of course, desirous, as in the early days, to train all in every sec-

tion of work. For days he would watch the moods, inclinations and movements of the aspirants, and then slowly suggest a line of work through which one could easily unfold one's faculties and serve the world in an effective manner. This created an interest in their work and the aspirants did their allotted duties to the perfect satisfaction of their Master.

Swamiji never kept anything as personal. He had no secrets. He always looked to the interests of those who stayed with him first. He did not offend their susceptibilities, and personally attended to their needs. He provided costly Sanskrit books to those who had a desire to do some research work in the ancient scriptures. He spent a large part of the sale proceeds of his publications, Ayurvedic medicines prepared at the Ashram, as also the donations he received from his devotees, for providing boarding and lodging facilities to the ever-growing number of Sadhaks.

SAINTLY MANAGEMENT

Swamiji gives full freedom to all those who stay in his Ashram. He never interferes with their ways of life and actions. He bestows upon them all his love and provides opportunities to develop themselves in the best possible manner. Naturally, they all feel quite at home and show a keen interest in doing something good. To express their gratitude, the householder-devotees contributed their mite to Swamiji for enlarging the activities of the Society. He himself utilizes every bit of his energy and money for the progress of the Sadhaks and for the good of the world.

Swamiji has a strange method of enabling the harvesting of good results even from such actions of his disciples as would not have been carefully thought about or intended with sincerity of purpose. He has perfect confidence in all the aspirants, and is ever keen to give responsible works even to newcomers. Even to an inexperienced Sadhak, he would ask to take charge of the work of the Secretary or the Cashier. Due to the constant encouragement given by Swamiji, to our great surprise, such new Sadhaks would prove their efficiency well in any office they have been entrusted with.

Swamiji would say often: "Everyone in the Ashram is a gem, a rare jewel. Put them in any race, they will win." If anyone got overstrained on account of heavy work, or happened to misbehave with any other Ashramite, or became egotistic and arrogant, Swamiji would just ask him to take complete rest or to go to Gangotri or Badrinath for quiet Sadhana. He would also provide the necessary money, and welcome him back when after some time the Sadhak returned. Swamiji does not believe in the indispensibility of any individual.

Throughout the last thirtyfive years and more, Swamiji has been very steady in his dynamic Sadhana and selfless service. He himself is even now staying in a rented building, though he has spent hundreds of thousands of rupees in providing boarding and lodging for devotees and aspirants, and even though the Ashram has dozens of buildings. His life is, indeed, a grand sacrifice for the good of the world. Truly, Swami Sivananda lives to serve the world and make mankind happy.

A CABLE MESSAGE ON WORLD PEACE

World peace follows heart-to-heart feeling among nations, and a deep sense of citizenship of man in the Universal Government of the Almighty. May benign blessings of the Supreme Being crown the Conference with success. May peace, love, wisdom, and harmony prevail everywhere. May Lord bless the convenors.

Message For All

(A Tape-recorded Message of Swami Sivananda)

You are the ever-blissful, immortal Atman—not this perishable, painful body. You have taken birth here as a human being in order to realize this. Never forget this even for a moment. This is your foremost duty in life. All other duties are secondary and all duties of life should be performed in such a manner that they lead you to this grand goal of Self-realization.

Having come into this world of pain and death, try to realize the Self, and attain liberation. Do not come once again to this world of pain and death. Attain Self-realization, and rejoice in the Atman forever.

There is a great realm where there is neither hunger nor thirst, neither pain nor grief, neither fear nor delusion, neither income tax nor expenditure tax, neither moths nor dacoits. Do you know where that realm is? Do you want to know where it is? If you do, I will tell you now. It is in your own heart.

THAT THOU ART

Within you dwells the supreme Lord of the universe, the very life of your life, soul of your soul, your very being. That thou art, in truth. Realize this. What a magnificent state it is! What glory! What thrill! You will instantly feel that you are distinct from the world, from this body composed of the five elements. You will realize "I am the immortal Atman."

This immortal Atman is the all-pervading reality. It is the substratum for the entire universe. Therefore, you are one with all. You are the all. You are the all-in-all. Feel this. It is no use repeating Vedantic formulae like a parrot. You must realize them. Truth must become part and parcel of your life. You must live this truth.

YOGA OF SYNTHESIS

For this purpose, I have given you the Yoga of synthesis. You must serve all, love all, give, and share with all, purify yourself, meditate and realize. There is no use repeating Vedantic formulae without putting them into practice.

Do you really feel that you are one with all? Then you will run to the help of the needy. You will be eager to serve. Wherever there is pain and suffering, there you will go, and try to relieve that pain.

Do you feel that your own Self dwells in all? Then you will love all. You will be free from jealousy, hatred and ill-will. How can evil exist with wisdom in your heart? Your heart will be ever pure like crystal. You will want to give, give, give all to everyone. This is the mark of one who aspires for Self-realization.

Break down the walls that imprison you. Do you know what they are? Lust, anger, greed and egotism. Walls made not of brick and cement, but of ignorance and delusion. I will give you a wonderful hammer with which to smash these walls. It is meditation on the Atman: feeling, realizing "I am the immortal Atman."

SADHANA

Plunge into Sadhana. Start it from today. Regular meditation alone will give you the actual realization of the Atman. Get up in the early morning and meditate. Withdraw the mind and the senses from the world. Direct the gaze within. Do Japa. Pray. There is a great spiritual power in the Lord's name. Have faith. Practise. You will yourself realize this. Be regular in your Japa. Meditation will come by itself. The Lord will lead you along the royal road to His lotus-feet. Cling to the

divine name. It is the supreme saviour in this Kali Yuga (present age).

If the mind runs here and there during meditation, gently bring it to the Lakshya (object of meditation). Do not wrestle with it. Do Japa. It will come under your perfect control soon. At the same time cultivate Vairagya or dispassion for worldly objects. Serve. Selfless service will purify your heart and enable you to dive deeper in meditation.

Love all. Cosmic love will remove all obstacles on the path, and will illumine it

with the Light of the Lord. Give, give, share what you have with all. This is the surest means to expand the heart, to annihilate all evil qualities and cultivate virtues. Practise the Yoga of synthesis. Do a little of all Sadhanas. Japa, meditation, Kirtan, Asana, Pranayama, selfless service, Likhita Japa (Mantra-writing), study of scriptures—all these are necessary. It will lead you to rapid evolution and Self-realization in this very birth.

May you shine as a Yogi, Jivanmukta, in this very birth! May God bless you!

Sivananda Kusumanjali

(Sri Jayashankar M. Raval, Kutch)

अनन्तश्रीपूर्ण योगेश्वर श्री शिवानन्दस्वामीचरणानां चतुःसप्तत्या जयन्त्याः पुण्यावसरे
वन्दनाकुसुमाञ्जलिः वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम्

जातं दक्षिणभारते सुललिते पट्टामडाविस्थले
पार्वत्याननपङ्कजादितिभवं विख्यातविप्रान्वयम्
• कुण्डस्वामिसुनामशोभितमहो लावण्यमूर्तिं स्वयं
भक्त्या सर्वजनेडितं शिशुवरं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥१॥
दृष्ट्वालोकमधर्ममार्गानिरतं धर्मं च हानिं गतं
साधूनां विपदं तथा समुदयं पाखण्डिनां सर्वतः
उद्धृत्य जगतोऽवतीर्णमधुना पूर्णाशतो विश्वपां
भक्त्या तं जगदीश्वरं सुरगुरुं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥२॥
लोकानुग्रहकाञ्चया दितितलं येनैव संभूयितं
बाल्यं यस्य मनोहरं सकृदृणं ह्याशास्पदं सर्वथा
यच्चोतो दयया द्रवन्मुदुतमं दृष्ट्वा जनान् दुःखितान्
भक्त्या तं कर्णपाकरं सुमहितं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥३॥
व्याधिप्रस्तजनान् विलोक्य मथितं कारुण्यवद्यन्मनो
वैद्यानां पठितं सुशास्त्रमखिलं तेषां रुजां नष्टये
येनान्दान् दश सेविताः प्रभुधिया लोका मलायास्थिता
भक्त्या तं भिषजां वरं सुखकरं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥४॥
संसाराब्धिनिमज्जतां भवरुजं संछेत्तुमङ्गीकृतं
पटुसम्पत्त्युतं विरक्तिभरितं संन्यस्तमानन्दम्
साक्षादर्शनमात्मनो ह्यधिगतं कृत्वा तपः साधनं
भक्त्या तं यमिनां वरं सुविरलं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥५॥
गङ्गायास्तुते हिमाचलतले पुण्ये प्रदेशेऽवनौ

आत्मानन्दभृदाश्रमो विरचितो लोकेऽद्वितीयोऽस्ति यः
विश्वं यं मनुते निजातिदलनं यात्रास्थलं पावनं
भक्त्याऽऽनन्दकरं विशालहृदयं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥६॥
येनात्मन्यपि संस्थितेन मनुजाः सज्जीवनं साधुयु-
रित्युद्दिश्य सुदिव्यजीवनकरः संघोऽस्ति संस्थापितः
शाखा दिन्नु विदिन्नु यस्य शतशो विस्तारिताः श्रेयसे
भक्त्याऽलौकिकजीवनं विदधतं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥७॥
सद्ग्रन्था रचिता विभिन्नविषया रत्नोपमा ये भुवि
भक्तिज्ञानसुकर्मणां त्रिपथगा सञ्चारिता पावनी
ये पापा अमराभवन्ति मनुजा पीत्वा यदीयां सुधां
भक्त्या दिव्यसुधास्रवं सततगं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥८॥
नास्त्येका जगति प्रजा सुवचनैर्येनैव नो बोधिता
विश्वं प्रेमसुसाधनेन जगतः शान्तिर्हि संस्थाप्यताम्
शुद्धात्मप्रभवो जनेष्वभिमतो यस्य प्रभावो महान्
भक्त्या तं क्षितिचक्रशासनकरं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥९॥
निष्क्रेणुयमनन्तशक्तिमतुलं सेवापरं योगिनं
सिद्धार्थं वरदं सुमङ्गलकरं कष्टघ्नमानन्दम्
साकल्येन विमुक्तिसाधनपथं संबोधयन्तं विभुं
भक्त्या विश्वगुरुं ममैकशरणं वन्दे शिवं मत्प्रभुम् ॥१०॥

चतुःसप्ततिर्वर्षस्य प्रारम्भे शिवसद्गुरोः ।

पादाब्जयोः प्रयच्छामि वन्दनाकुसुमाञ्जलिम् ॥

Embodiment of Divine Love

(Sri A.G.R. Sharma, Sirpur)

God is love. Love is God. Gurudev Sivananda is an embodiment of love. He is an infinite source of divine love. Love flows in his veins. His voice echoes with love. His form radiates divine love. His books carry the message of love. Love flows through his pen.

In a moderately short time he has built up a world-wide institution, the Divine Life Society, where people find their way out of the miseries of the world and the cycle of birth and death. The foundation of Gurudev's institution is divine love. It is built with the materials of service, compassion and fellowship. He has demonstrated to us that with pure love the whole world can be won over. Material wealth can only secure mundane and perishable objects, but Gurudev's infinite spiritual love wins the imperishable, all-pervading, eternal Soul. Thousands have been and are being attracted to his lotus feet from all over the world. Thousands have changed their way of life, and are shining in their inherent divine nature.

By contact with Gurudev, many sinners have been turned into spiritual aspirants and saintly souls. What is that power in Gurudev that has achieved all this? It is Gurudev's divine love. Anyone coming into contact with him cannot be separated from him, nay, even the most powerful detractor cannot approach one who has taken refuge at the lotus feet of Gurudev. He binds them with the imperishable, eternal cord of love.

In the world we see different types of love—love between husband and wife, between father and son, between friends and relatives. They are brought together, not by pure love, but by mutual, utilitarian fac-

tors or by circumstantial necessity. Worldly love is selfish and subject to change. If motives are not fulfilled, love diminishes. If selfish attachment is jilted, love turns into hatred. Can we call this pure love? No, never. Pure love is immutable and imperishable. Selfish love vanishes with the perishable bodies and objects. Pure love is eternal and is realized in the union of souls.

Many have not seen the physical form of Gurudev. But many of his devotees had his vision. Out of compassion towards his devotees, Gurudev travels, unseen by human eyes, to impart instructions to them, give initiation in dream and appear at the time of danger. By only reading his books, which cover a wide range of subjects such as different kinds of Yoga, ethics, religion, philosophy and medicine, many have been and are being drawn towards him. These books are eternal treasures. They carry Gurudev's message of love to all corners of the world. He uses the nectar of divine love to capture the hearts of sincere souls. To get butter from milk, we have to churn it. So also to experience divine love we have to churn the milk of the Lord's name, with the churning rod of devotion. No one can explain in words the sweetness of honey. One can only say that it is very sweet. So also Gurudev's infinite love can only be experienced, but not adequately described. We can know about God's love through Guru's love.

In the past, Rishis attained the eternal state of realization and bliss by severe austerities. But in this "iron age," with our frail body and weak mind, we are unable to do such austerities. Then what is the way to attain God-realization? Gurudev.

knowing the helpless state of man and with a mission to enable him realize his true divine nature, has given us the simple formula: SERVE, LOVE, MEDITATE, REALIZE. He assures us that practice of this formula will surely give us salvation.

Gurudev wants us, nay commands us with love, to practise in our daily life, this formula of serving the poor and the sick selflessly, loving unselfishly the creations of the Lord, sharing with one another our material riches or even what little we have, meditating on the Divine—in order to finally realize our identity with the Creator. Here is a unique prescription given by

Gurudev, which is an unfailing remedy for the ills of mundane life:

- 1 teaspoonful faith in God
- 3 teaspoonful love for God
- 1½ teaspoonful devout attitude
- 2 teaspoonful Kirtan

1 ounce of recitation of God's name (Quantity to be increased gradually, and the mixture to be taken twice daily, in the morning at 4 a.m., and at night at 9 p.m.)

Gurudev has shown us a practical and easy way to do Sadhana and realize the goal of life. Let us dedicate ourselves to the practice of his teachings to the best of our ability.

Spirit of Jesus Christ in Sivananda

(Sri Fra Johannes Wilhelm, Munich)

Lord Jesus has said to his disciples: "Verily, verily, I say unto you that he that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he also do, and greater works than these shall he do." (John)

Like Jesus, Sivananda has given us universal teachings to suit all seekers of truth. No one has done in this age so much in the sphere of world-wide dissemination of basic spiritual knowledge, as he.

We have many religions on earth, but there is only one God who is immanent in all beings, and the same Spirit has bequeathed to us Swami Sivananda. Unity of life is the central teaching of this saint. The one God is known by various names, and the same goal is reached by various paths.

Swamiji continues to interpret to us the age-old spirit of the teaching of Jesus, namely, hope, faith and love. Swamiji lives in all religions. His books convey to us the voice of God, the same voice which rang in the gospel of Jesus.

Swami Sivananda, like Jesus to his disciple John, says: "Come and behold!" God is in all beings, but few are aware of this fact. Many men and women have found in the 'religion' of Swamiji God as the supreme Father and Sivananda as the Son.

Everyone can find God in one's own heart through the practice of the teachings of His Holiness. May we, on the occasion of his birthday, remember in our hearts that we are one with Swami Sivananda, and thus receive his blessings.

BEHOLDING THE ATMAN IN ALL

The injunction of beholding the Atman or the same Self in all beings is effective only in highly evolved souls who are very, very rare. In others, it is at best academic and at worst highly hypocritical. Without complete annihilation of the ego and selfishness, to say so is absurd.

The Saviour Is Always With Us

(Sri Meermaidoo T. Somanah, Mauritius)

Dear readers, read this article, and you will know how the divine name of Sivananda was able to save us from death and destruction.

Some months ago, the beautiful Island of Mauritius was hit by a dreadful cyclone, known as "CAROL," which devastated numerous houses of every type of structure, including concrete buildings. It raged at 160 miles per hour. More than 60,000 persons were homeless—victims of the cyclone. All thatched houses were swept off completely. Animals were killed and drowned in the sea and river. More than 30 persons were killed and 200 persons severely injured.

Such a cyclone never visited Mauritius. When it began to rage, my wife and I sat in our shrine, praying to the Lord to save us and our house. A severe squall blew on, and our furnitures were drenched. We held the books of Swamiji in our trembling hands and prayed, when the shutters and window-panes started breaking up and the house itself was shaking. We found encouragement by uttering the names of Swami Sivananda and Father Laval. We had a strange feeling that Sivananda was with us, witnessing our fortitude against the cyclone, which God sent, so we thought, to test our mental equilibrium and faith in Him.

Thanks to the Lord, as we uttered the divine name of Sivananda, our house escaped from being torn up. Sivananda had saved our lives and the house. The Verity College, of which I am the founder, had been damaged but not our house. We must pay our sincere tributes to Sivananda for

his power that sustained us. It was a miracle to find ourselves in safety, whereas the houses near about, though of concrete structure, were pulled down. It was, indeed, a miracle that all the houses of the staunch disciples of Sivananda were not damaged at all. Many people had come to know about the spiritual teachings of Swamiji through the monthly journal, *The Educationist*, of which I am the editor. All of them later told me that they had taken refuge in uttering the name of Swamiji. Long live our divine Sivananda.

Let us follow the precious teachings of Swamiji, so that we may mould ourselves in the right manner, within the fold of spiritual life. The cyclone taught us that we should aim at something real and everlasting, and not attach undue importance to the illusory things of the world. May we follow, with sincerity and humility, the wonderful gospel of Sivananda, whose contributions to the revival of spirituality are well-known in all parts of the world. His books will ever be a proud legacy to humanity. He has already accomplished the Divine Mission. But the world needs him more than ever before. He represents truth and religion in action. His philosophical teachings are our temples. His wonderful books are pregnant with divine glory. He preaches that the true significance of religion consists in thinking of the good of, and doing good to, humanity at large. Lord Jesus has come in the form of divine Sivananda, to teach and elevate the suffering humanity. The Saviour is living at the foot of the Himalayas, at Rishikesh, in India.

Universal Spiritual Guide

(Dr. S. Krishna Rao, MBBS, DMR, Madras)

Foremost amongst the modern spiritual luminaries and guides, Swami Sivanānda, has been, for several decades, spending most of his time, energy and resources in spreading spiritual knowledge all world over. This he is doing by writing books and pamphlets, contributing to journals, and distributing them mostly as free gifts, liberally and lavishly, to all those come to him or write to him. Whenever anyone comes to visit Swamiji to receive his blessings, before that person leaves the Ashram he is literally showered with Swamiji's books, whether his stay there had been only for a few hours or days or weeks or months.

Swamiji's writings have a persuasive appeal, confident assertion and a spiritual force behind, which do not fail to impress even the most confirmed unbeliever, convincing him with cogent arguments and reasoning. Many are the instances of those who have taken to a religious way of life and are undergoing ardent spiritual discipline after having read Swamiji's books or on having his Darshan. One visit to him in his Ashram will convince anyone that all that Swamiji preaches or writes, he actually lives in his life. It may sound incredible, but it is quite true. His career is an epitome of the Gita way of life. What he preaches he demonstrates by practically living. One visit to him is worth more than reading about him or studying his books.

What surprises me most is that we have amidst us a living embodiment of virtues, a personification of love itself, a saint, an Avatar, and yet only a microscopic minority are taking the trouble of coming in contact with him and earn his grace. Swamiji is an ocean of love and felicity, which he freely distributes to anyone who goes

to him, or contacts him otherwise. No one who has done so remains untransformed. One comes back with a new vision, a new outlook on life, and finds a new courage to face the travails and turmoils of the mundane existence.

Swamiji's teachings are so simple and clear that everyone can follow and understand them. The most complicated systems of Yoga, subtle wisdom of the *Upanishads* and terse Vedantic assertions, Swamiji explains in such a manner and style that they could be easily understood and practised by the masses. In order to cater to different tastes and temperaments, he has given the sublime truths in the form of parables, humorous poems, stories, epistles, as well as articles, treatises and voluminous commentaries. The child and the scholar alike can benefit from his writings.

Sivananda Literature has become so expansive that one can get immersed in it and spend a lifetime in study. Swamiji has written on virtually all the aspects of Yoga, religion, philosophy and spiritual topics in general. For the modern man he advocates a combined and synthetic course of all the different systems of Yoga, so that the personality of the student can be smoothly moulded and harmoniously developed. For a common aspirant, needing direct instructions, he has given the famous 'Twenty Spiritual Instructions,' the 'Seven Cultures,' and the spiritual diary and resolve forms, the 'Universal Prayer' and the 'Song of Yoga of Synthesis.'

The basic teachings of Swamiji are most appropriate and of utmost necessity at the present time, when man has complicated his life so much and when he is not

sure of how to manage the vast powers that science and technology has unleashed. Man's spiritual development remains retarded. He either thinks of God as an autocrat or a totally unconcerned entity, and lacks the faith to regard Him as a loving Parent who is awaiting with his outstretched arms for His children to come. Man, in spite of his rationalism, lacks faith in the Almighty, the loving God, who has planned

the whole universe, including every creature in it, and it is only He who looks after them. In order to inculcate and infuse this faith in the Lord and our duty towards Him, duty to our fellow-beings and duty to ourselves, Swamiji has been working incessantly all these years.

May Swami Sivananda live long and illumine the path we have to tread, is my prayer.

PRECIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PATH OF DIVINE LIFE

(*Dr. Hugo E. Happacher, Ecuador*)

By founding the Divine Life Society, the Sivanandashram and other allied institutions, and through the authorship of numerous works on spiritual topics, Swami Sivananda has honoured the Divine Being, our Most Beloved, beyond measure. His thoughts and writings have radiated the love of God far and wide, and his benefic influence cannot be measured by the yardstick of time or space.

I value and benefit from every word that the Swami has written in his books and journals. In fact, every line of his in *The Divine Life* has given me spiritual uplift. I am grateful for his precious contributions to the path of divine life, which are so necessary and life-giving.

My heart and mind have a deep sympathy for spiritual India which has given so many leading soldiers of God. They are trying to save mankind from the harmful effects of materialism and bring peace to the troubled world. I am sure that God's Army will, in due time, gain full victory.

LIGHT ON THE SPIRITUAL HORIZON

(*Sri Frederico Bernstein, Argentina*)

The world today suffers from various types of misleadings. The materialistic creed has very little to do with truth and love that are genuine and selfless. It is no surprise, therefore, that man ultimately looks to spiritual values for the solution of his problems. God has given us a light on the horizon in the form of Swami Sivananda, to give us spiritual guidance. We are thankful to him for his noble teachings, by following which we could immensely benefit ourselves and solve our difficulties. Only through the practice of truth, love and purity can we cultivate a harmonious relationship with the universe. May Swami Sivananda enjoy good health and continue to serve humanity through his teachings and through the Divine Life Society.

Spiritual Role of India

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

The Western world has given the people of the East the benefit of their scientific discoveries and political ideologies. Our life has been made comfortable, materially speaking. Our thoughts, as soon as they are expressed, are enabled to reach the farthest corners of the world, through teleprinters and the wireless. Great events are immortalized in films; our voice is captured and preserved on the gramophone disc and the tape-record. Electricity has become part and parcel of our life. We owe all these to our Western brethren.

What is India's role? In what way should we repay this debt of scientific inventions we owe to the people of the West? And, what do they need?

I have a heavy foreign mail; and in the Ashram here, there are many Westerners living and practising Yoga. There is a remarkable spiritual awakening in the West. There is a dormant spiritual hunger there.

India has the spiritual food that could satiate this hunger of the West. Holy Bharatavarsha has always been the spiritual pioneer of mankind. That is her role now, as it has always been.

SPIRITUAL FOOD

Man needs bread. But, man does not live by bread alone. Just, as the physical body requires food, the soul of man also requires its food. Prayer is that food. Meditation is that food. Communion with God is that food. This spiritual food is at least as important as the food for the body.

Prayer and meditation enliven the spiritual aspect of man's being. They provide a healthy basis for the ethical and moral aspects of his being. A man of prayer, a man who meditates on God regu-

larly, is one who has the proper scale of values.

To have the proper scale of values is very important. Material prosperity and scientific advancement are necessary. But moral and spiritual culture is even more necessary. Man should be good and he should constantly endeavour to do good. This is the essence of all religions—"Be good; do good."

GOOD OF ALL

If every man grows in goodness, if goodness has been enthroned in his heart, then he will utilize all his faculties, all his knowledge and all his powers, for the good of all. Otherwise, if his heart is ruled by selfishness and greed, he will only endeavour to exploit others for his own betterment and satisfaction. If everyone thinks only of one's own good, then there will be universal tension, disharmony and restlessness. If everyone is intent on being good to one's neighbour, there will be universal goodwill, peace, progress and prosperity.

This is the ideal of Rama Rajya, or the rule of Rama. This is life, divine. This is the teaching of all true well-wishers of humanity. This is the message that humanity needs today. This spiritual outlook on life as the basis of ethical and moral discipline, is what Bharatavarsha can and should give the world. The scripture of India abound in spiritual truths; they have to be shared with the rest of the world. This is our foremost duty at the present juncture. The East and the West have thus to help each other and let the entire humanity live as one family, progressing in all spheres of human activity, promoting world peace and humanweal.

May the light of God illumine the path of mankind.

Human Aspect of Sivananda

(*Swami Sivananda-Hridayananda*, MBBS, DO)

Eighth of September, the most eventful day of the year to us, is the day of the advent of our beloved Gurudev, Sri Swami Sivananda. The very thought of his advent makes me bow down to the Lord with all joy and gratitude.

Memories of some of the seemingly insignificant but soul-transforming influences he has exerted in my daily life, and the practical lessons I have imbibed from him during the last few years of my contact with him, fill my heart with inexpressible emotions of indebtedness and loving reverence. The day-to-day life of Swamiji is a glorious and inspiring spectacle. In fact, throughout the day he enacts the teachings of the Gita in the most simple manner.

Swamiji is a fathomless ocean of virtues and, thus, in his ideal personality we have a perfect, practical guide who constantly inspires us to do good and be good.

Serene and saintly, never tormented by pain or remorse, entirely beyond the clutches of temptation, ceaselessly engaged in selfless work, Swamiji manifests his divinity in all his actions. Love and sympathetic understanding, two of the most powerful forces in this world, combined with elegance of manner, beautifully blend in his personality.

DIVINE QUALITIES

According to Swamiji, love is the key that fits the lock of any heart, and it is with this key that he has so easily succeeded in opening the locks of thousands of hearts all over the world. His tender and gentle words, genuine consideration, loving smile and inborn humility, contribute to a great extent to the ease with which he handles people of all temperaments. His loving

heart commands obedience without exerting any authority.

Many of us are under the wrong notion that merely closing the eyes and sitting in a lonely place, which we imagine to be meditation, constitute spiritual life. We even think that the development of virtues such as simplicity, humility, adaptability, *etc.*, are insignificant in the path of spirituality. We do not understand that purification of heart by ethical perfection alone will enable us to do real meditation.

We may not commit great mistakes outwardly, and so we may even feel that we are evolved souls, but most of us are not aware of our own weaknesses and shortcomings that we exhibit during our daily dealings even in simple affairs. Swamiji used to say: "Watch a man under three conditions, and then come to your conclusion about his goodness. Watch him when he is desperately hungry, when he is provoked, and when his egotism is touched a little."

DAILY LIFE

If we observe Swamiji's daily activities, we will understand how he shows us the way, out of his infinite compassion for us, by descending from his divine heights, and moving and acting as a human being in a perfect manner.

Here are some incidents from which we understand how a human being ought to be, as illustrated by Sivananda, our divine Master.

Observe Swamiji while he is having his lunch.

Swami Krishnananda (junior), the blessed soul who prepares food for Swamiji, approaches him to serve.

"Avoji! Krishna Bhagawan! Kleem

Krishnaya Namah," Swamiji greets Swami Krishna with an affectionate smile.

It may look a simple thing, but it works wonders. Swami Krishna, having heard these affectionate words from Swamiji, forgets his tiredness, and his face beams with a joyful smile.

Now Krishna starts serving. Swamiji tastes a dish and remarks, "Ah, wonderful! Krishna has become an expert now. He must be given a title. Shantananda, give him the title *Nala Paka Ratna* (gem among cooks). Henceforth address him as NPR."

TACTFULNESS

A little later Swamiji discovers some defect in *dosai*, a South Indian preparation. It is not prepared in the way Swamiji likes it. He tactfully points out the defect to Krishna.

"I think, Krishnaji, you added a little extra *dal* today, or perhaps you did not get the proper quality of *dal*. See, the other day you prepared the same thing. How wonderful it was! Try to improve upon it tomorrow, sir, oh NPR, will you?" Swamiji's instructions are serious and, at the same time, the manner in which he gives them is so jovial that the person concerned does not feel hurt.

Now Swamiji decides to invite a few guests for lunch the next day. What do we do usually? We will just order the cook. Swamiji also can easily order in a similar manner—not even an order, but a word from him will do. Swamiji, on the other hand, adopts a different method.

"Krishnananda Bhagawan," says he, "Can we invite Sri N and party for lunch tomorrow? Have you got enough provisions? Don't worry, you will not have more work. I will invite only four or five persons, all right?"

The pleasant manner in which the request is made immediately elicits an enthusiastic affirmation. Swamiji then gradually proceeds:

"What will you prepare? Don't bother to prepare too many items, one or two will do." And Swamiji himself suggests some of the dishes.

By this time the psychological response of Krishna is such that he is ready to prepare any number of dishes, and volunteers to do so.

Then comes the gentle suggestion from Swamiji:

"We can include Swami S and Swami O, can't we?"

"Oh yes, Swamiji," comes the immediate reply from Krishna. In the end, the proposed lunch for four persons ends with a joyful consent from Krishna to include at least ten more guests (even though the so-called 'consent' of Krishna is quite irrelevant, Swamiji being the absolute master, but this only shows his great humility and tact).

RESPECT TO SUBORDINATES

Next, Swamiji finds it necessary to give certain instructions to Krishna regarding cooking. Swamiji waits till Krishna goes out of the room and he tells the others present:

"Ohji, tell Krishna to add less salt in the preparations. Request him to make a little *khir* and *bada* also. But don't tell him all this now. Too many instructions at a time will irritate anyone. Tell him later on, when he is in a good mood."

Next day, during the feast, Swamiji introduces Krishna to the guests and praises him in their presence. Krishna feels very happy.

If we learn thus to deal with those who serve us, with love and consideration, our servants will not run away without

notice, we will have less of mental tension, we would be able to create a pleasant atmosphere at home or at office and get more efficient and voluntary work from those who work with us.

To be able to practise thus, we must constantly remember Swamiji's teachings: "Destroy selfishness, egotism, vanity and pride that constrict and stand in the way of developing universal love. Melt and destroy all barriers that separate man from man. The idea of superiority is ignorance. Feel for others as you feel for yourself. See the one Self in all."

Swamiji believes that there is much good in the worst of us, and many bad traits in the best of us. So he advises us to see the good alone in everyone. Swamiji pleads: "You are so kind to yourself, in spite of all the faults that are lying hidden in you. Give the other person also a chance. Instead of denouncing him for his petty mistakes, give him also a chance to improve by understanding him and being kind to him. Praise him for the good qualities found in him. There is a mysterious power in lavishing praise. The magic of appreciation will act as a powerful tonic and will make a person endeavour to live up to that praise."

DO IT NOW

Swamiji practises what he preaches, and hence his way of pointing out and correcting the mistakes in others is unique in its technique. His tranquillity and firmness, his depth of benevolence which prevents him from harbouring any ill feelings against the wrong doer, combined with his largeheartedness to appreciate the good in a person even when he has committed mistakes, elevate our Gurudev to godly heights. Just witness this scene in the office.

For the last few days Swamiji has been repeatedly reminding Swami X about an important message which he was entrusted to write and send to the party concerned.

Although Swami X is intelligent and efficient, yet he is rather negligent about disposing off his work at the proper time. Swamiji knows and understands this weakness in him. Without the least irritation, Swamiji was going on reminding Swami X continuously for seven days—a patience which is impossible for an ordinary boss to possess.

Now, realizing that unless the message is posted in a couple of days, it would not reach its destination in time, Swamiji called Swami X just before it was time to leave the office, and reminded thus:

"Ohji, I think you have been busy. What about that message? Is it ready at least today?" We notice a little seriousness in Swamiji's face.

"No, Swamiji, I have made a rough copy of it; I will type it and bring it tomorrow for signature," replies Swami X.

"Why not today? Are you very much tired?"

"No, Swamiji, it is now time for Swamiji to leave the office."

"Doesn't matter. Go and type it now," orders Swamiji.

"Yes, Swamiji, I will type it just now and bring it to the Kutir (residence of Swamiji)."

"No, no, I cannot depend upon that. Get it just now typed. I will wait here till you finish typing."

With a disturbed countenance Swami X immediately hurried away to the next room.

BENEVOLENT AMEND

The whole scene took place in the office, where many visitors were assembled. Turning towards the devotees, Swamiji ex-

plained: "He is hard-working and is over-worked. So he could not get the message ready. He is very intelligent. He sings beautifully and delivers inspiring lectures. He is a wonderful Swami."

After a few minutes Swami X came back with the typed message. Swamiji went through it and exclaimed "Most wonderful," and then passed the message on to an important visitor with the remark, "Just see, how beautifully he has written!"

Not satisfied with the praise he showed on Swami X, Swamiji wanted to pacify him for having pointed out his mistake in front of others. So he requested him with an affectionate smile: "Ohji, sing one of your beautiful Bhajans. All are anxious to hear you."

Swami X entertained us with his song, and when he heard the exclamation "wonderful" from Swamiji, he forgot all about his hurt feelings and was quite happy.

Thus, endowed with a penetrating knowledge of the intricate mechanism of the human mind, Swamiji employs the most simple but effective methods to file off the angularities in our nature, to strengthen

our spirit and fill our heart with self-confidence, hope and happiness.

ETHICAL PERFECTION

As we all know, ethics is the very foundation of spiritual life, the central theme of all religions, the root of all austerities, and the underlying principle of all happiness. The subtle, sublime and profound ethical perfection in Swamiji can be witnessed in his day-to-day life. For those who aspire to learn from him, every word, every act, nay, every movement of his, could serve as an invaluable lesson to reflect upon and inculcate.

Unshaken by anger and malice, lust and greed, hatred and jealousy, unswayed by likes and dislikes, with equal vision, a broad heart and a catholic mind, Swamiji has been and is guiding us towards the goal of God-realization.

Let us all join together on this sacred day, his birth-day, and pray for his health and long life. Let him be our eternal guiding Light.

Come ye all, to drink and enjoy the elixir of Sivananda.

NOURISHER OF THE SOUL WITH UNIVERSAL WISDOM

(Sri George E. Fowler, Bombay)

Even as I commence to write these lines, I feel the warmth of the omnipresence of the Lord pervading my being. Swami Sivananda already knows that it is my need and keen desire to come to him.

My prayer to him is: "O human river, whose banks are both wide and high, carrying the life-stream of the Rishis to all those who seek the way, please extend to me your grace and bid me come, that I may add my tiny stream to the swiftly but silently flowing waters of truth, whose channel you are. Draw me to you, beloved Master, and nourish my soul with the warmth of universal wisdom."

First Meeting With Swamiji

(Prof. Anand Prakash Talwar, M.A., New Delhi)

Nestling at the foot-hills of the Himalayas is the small town of Rishikesh. There lies the celestial abode of a realized saint and seer, Jagat Guru Swami Sivanandaji. His voice pervades the whole spiritual world, and his arms appear to be embracing the anguished souls of all humanity.

I had a pleasant experience—a thrill of my life—as I stepped on the hallowed grounds of Sivanandanagar on 3rd July this year. I had no idea of what an Ashram was till that day, and so, I was harbouring uncomfortable thoughts about my inadequacy in being there.

I felt that as if my entire being was suddenly transformed as I had the first Darshan of the revered Swamiji, when he came out of his Kutir on his way to the office building. Like a new boy in a school, conscious of my figure and movements, I was trudging towards the office hall along with other devotees and visitors who followed Swamiji. I had no courage even to offer my salutations to him as that would have meant going nearer, which I could not do on account of what I thought was my inadequacy.

But who can escape the all-seeing eyes of Swamiji? He himself asked about my identity, and then he made me feel at ease with a smile, benign demeanour and nectarine voice. It was simply an uplifting and elevating experience. My soul was in a higher region and my heart filled with gratitude.

During his office wook, combined with Satsanga, Swamiji asked one of his disciples

to hand me a couple of books, and I was also given a cup of warm milk. Where was now the feeling of newness and non-eligibility? The cloud of uncertainty had vanished before the sun of love.

Soon I began to feel like one of the members of a family—the blessed family of Swami Sivananda—basking in the sunshine of his love and munificence. Guru's grace, they say, is the prop of human life. For me, it had been waiting, as it were.

Swamiji takes a personal interest in all and sundry. His words are a source of inspiration and bliss. I had the additional benefit of attending the daily classes on the *Gita* and the *Yoga-Vasishtha*.

Days slipped by quickly. The 8th of July was the Guru Purnima Day. Gururji was in a jolly mood and his personality was permeated with supreme love and compassion. We all were lost in a divine atmosphere, and felt at one with the holy of holies.

Next day was the day of my departure, as my college (where I teach) was to open shortly afterwards. With a heavy heart, I bowed at the feet of Swamiji and asked for his permission to leave.

"May God bless you, Anand Prakash, 'light of joy' (the meaning of my name), Om Namo Narayanaya," said he. The notes of these heavenly words even now make the bells of the Divine ring in my ears, and often, in my calm moments, I recall Swamiji's divine figure and soul-stirring voice which now constitute the bliss of my solitude.

Janaka's Realization

(A Vedantic Story by Sri Swami Sivananda)

King Janaka was in his Darbar, surrounded by wise counsels, ministers and warrior chiefs.

Sage Ashtavakra entered. King Janaka at once got up from his seat, came forward, bowed before the sage and offered him a seat.

Sage Ashtavakra kindly enquired about the king's welfare.

"May it please your Holiness," started the king, and when he got the affirmative nod from the sage, he continued, "I pray to your Holiness that I must have realization of the Self as quickly as possible, as for example, as the saying goes, within the time taken to mount the saddle on a horse after having placed one foot in the stirrup.

"Yes, O king, so will it be," agreed the sage.

Immediately a horse was brought, and the sage and the king proceeded with the horse to a secluded place.

"Are you ready now?" the sage asked Janaka.

"Yes, I am," replied the king.

"What are you going to give me as Gurudakshina (traditional offering to the preceptor) for this instruction?"

"Whatever your Holiness would command," replied Janaka.

"Then, O king, offer me your kingdom, your body and your mind as Gurudakshina."

"So be it."

Then sage Ashtavakra remained quiet. He did not say a word. Time passed. King Janaka was restless. Every moment he expected the sage to say something, but Ashtavakra was as mute as a statue. King Janaka began to lose his patience.

"I have offered what your Holiness had commanded, and yet you remain silent"—Janaka was about to ask this question.

"How can you ask this question, O king?" enquired the sage, with a smile, having already guessed the question in the king's mind.

"Because you have not taught me anything yet, even after getting the Gurudakshina," replied Janaka.

"But how can you think? How can you use your mind at all, when you have offered it to me already? How can you have the individuality of your mind when it is already merged in mine? It is not yours now. It is mine." When this thought-provoking answer came from Sage Ashtavakra, that very moment Janaka realized that he was 'mindless' and attained the knowledge of the Self. He transcended the physical mind and became one with the cosmic consciousness. Janaka was already prepared for the dawn of Self-knowledge before Ashtavakra emblazoned it into him. He was renowned as a philosopher-king and led a life of purity.

After some time, Ashtavakra said: "O king, I am now giving back your mind to you. Tell me, what you have experienced just now with the cosmic mind?"

"O sage, I am blessed now. I realized that I am the Self, the unchanging witness of the physical mind and its modifications; I have known everything through the cosmic consciousness. I am that I am," Janaka exclaimed.

"I am returning back, O king, now that you have attained all that is worth attain-

ing, what you have offered me—your kingdom, your body and mind.” Having said this, sage Ashtavakra blessed the king and departed to the forest.

For highly evolved souls like Janaka,

i.e., for the Uttama Adhikaris (first class aspirants) even Sravana (hearing of the Truth) alone will spark off Self-realization. For those requiring self-discipline and cultivation of purity, the different stages of Sadhana have to be passed through.

Divine Ministration in the Service of Mankind

(Sri Swami Venkateswarananda, Madras)

Sadguru Swami Sivananda is an Avatara Purusha (an incarnated divine being), and has done meritorious services to mankind within the thirtyfive years of his divine ministration that could have been done by another person in the course of several centuries. In the past, Sri Sankaracharya did a tremendous good to the spiritual world during his short life span, the effects of which continue to be felt even after hundreds of years. Today, we have amidst us a living Sankara in the form of Swami Sivanandaji.

Spirituality was ingrained in the ancestry of Swamiji, and his international reputation as a world-teacher is not a matter of surprize. His mission is his worship of the cosmic Being immanent in all creations. His life is the way. His example is people's inspiration. Men, women and children, not only of India, but also from abroad, have been greatly benefited by his guidance and grace. They have drunk deep the nectar of spirituality at his feet.

Swamiji's personal influence and teachings have indirectly helped the cause of peace by directly offering to the people a spiritual ideal of life and showing them the various means of the practice of divine life. They have inspired and ennobled thousands

and thousands. The extent of the fulfilment of his life's mission will be judged by the degree of our devotion to him and sincerity to practise his teachings. In these days of global unrest and tension, we have a great need for the gospel and guidance of Swamiji.

There should be a concerted effort among the people to follow the path of divine life. Human life is a great blessing of God, and we should make the best use of it. Out of his great affection for humanity, Swamiji has established the Divine Life Society, for worldwide welfare, and any useful and good cause is bound to succeed. During the past twentyfive years the Society has been able to achieve much more than what other institutions could do during a much longer period.

Swamiji occupies a lofty position in the galaxy of saints and sages. His goodwill towards all is but God's will. His health is a part of the wealth of the nation. In his company, the pure among us can hear the voice of God. He lives to love and serve all. His Darshan alone has given relief to thousands of anguished hearts. By knowing him we attain the knowledge of the Self.

God As Divine Light

(Sri Swami Venkatesananda)

Whenever man loses the way of righteousness, the path of virtue, and whenever the undivine forces are overwhelmingly great, in the words of the *Bhagavad Gita*, God descends into our midst, to restore Dharma. Our scriptures describe various such incarnations of God, in which He came in various forms—as Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Man-Lion, Man, *etc.* (according to Dashavatara tradition). Even in the gradation of these Incarnations, there seems to be an evident evolutionary process. In any case, the Form suited the times and the need.

The present-day need is peculiar to the modern age. Space has shrunk. Man races with time itself. Speed is the spirit of the age. Democracy and socialism are rife in the very atmosphere: everything belongs to everybody! Therefore, whereas evil was personified in an Asura (demoniacal being) in days of yore, it is widespread nowadays. The same spirit of denial of God, of unrighteous actions, *etc.*, that dwelt in one Asura dwells—may be with less intensity—in the heart of men all over the world.

To fight this evil, we do not need just another person. For he will have to be everywhere at the same time, and he must appeal to all men. What we need is LIGHT. That Light will shine everywhere at the same time. It will illumine the path of all, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or nationality. Whatever be man's destination, the Light will guide him there: and, at the same time, it will also reveal the true nature of the destination so that he might see and discriminate between the right and the wrong ends of life.

That Light has descended upon this earth and is illumining the entire world

from Rishikesh. It enables man to grow into a divine being. It enables him to achieve integral perfection. It shows him the way to peace, plenty and prosperity. It illumines his path to success in life and God-realization. It enlightens his intellect so that he may divinize his entire life, spiritualize all his activities. Its beams, as they emerge from the supreme Source, spell the words SERVE, LOVE, MEDITATE, REALIZE.

In a world torn by strife, that Light reveals cosmic love as the supreme panacea for all ills. In a civilization characterized by selfishness and lust for power, position and sense-pleasures, it blazes the ideal of selfless service as the right expression of cosmic love, and limitless, spontaneous, overwhelming charity and generosity, as part and parcel of this selfless service. To a restless world that Light points out that peace can be had only in the Atma, through meditation and ultimately Self-realization.

Just as one sun shining millions of miles away is able to illumine the whole world, and give light and life to all beings, even so this spiritual Light is able to pervade and permeate the entire world with its divine rays, though it dwells in a corner of the Himalayas. From here spread the streamers of priceless spiritual enlightenment. From here glows the symbol of divine life.

In human form that Light is Sri Gurudev Swami Sivananda. In the abstract form it is his Message of Divine Life. To the inner spiritual eye of the seer, it is God Incarnate. May that Light shine in our midst for ever!

Seventyfour Today

(Sri N.C. Ghosh, M.A., Calcutta)

Neither age, nor the burden of problems, has been able to overpower the "modern saint" of the Himalayas, Swami Sivanandaji, who steps into his 74th year on the 8th of September 1960. If he has kept his head high during all the years of storms and stresses through which the Divine Life Society would have passed for several years, it is his extraordinary self-confidence and his firm faith in the future that have sustained his spirit and energy.

The Society had a very modest beginning, in 1936, but Swamiji's unflagging zeal and unflinching devotion to work, through so many years, have made it one of the unique institutions of India today. To his disciples and devotees he has become a symbol of their aspirations and hopes, and through him they could confidently look to the future.

Swamiji has given his best to mankind, but much more is yet expected from him for many more years to come, because the spiritual world cannot at the moment think of doing without his sage leadership, which has proved itself as a tremendous stabilizing force. In the spiritual firmament he is a bright star. Although he is South Indian by birth and ancestry, he belongs to the whole world.

His Holiness is a genius of a rare and unique type. Few in the history of the world have possessed all the qualities that Swamiji has. He is a man whose physical appearance itself immediately strikes one with its uncommon magnificence. Tall, well-proportioned and handsome of features, he reminds one of the kings described in fairy tales of the ancient times. His facial expression is magnetic, and, as he talks, sings or recites, people watching him

become spellbound by the mobility of the expression of his handsome face.

Physical majesty, combined with great intelligence and width of outlook in all the fields of thought, has given him a personality which is magical and which rouses respect and admiration in all hearts. His physical presence has such a hypnotic quality that wherever he has gone, in India, Malaya or Ceylon, people have stood and watched him as an object of wonder and supernatural grandeur.

Some say that he is like the Buddha, some see in him the divine light and no one ever looks upon him without feeling an overpowering admiration for his marvellous appearance, the wisdom that emanates from him and for the shades of his many-sided genius. Most ordinary people as well as advanced Sadhaks derive immense benefit from his teachings.

He has written many thought-provoking books, and they have made an indelible impression on the philosophical thought of the world, and wherever his teachings have spread, they have left an atmosphere of veneration for him. Above all, his faultless understanding of the subjects that have anything to do with human upliftment, has been quite remarkable. He has the vision of a united humanity, which he is trying, his best to inculcate into all.

Human life is a great gift of God. It must be lived for the fulfilment of the glorious purpose of God-realization. Otherwise, life is lived in vain. If man does not live to reach this goal, he is not really living, but merely dragging on a miserable existence.

Swamiji has written over 300 books on various subjects for the good of mankind,

and whatever subject he had touched he has excelled in. The lessons given in his books are soul-elevating, and therein is the message of immortality for us all. His philosophy and teachings are not for the chosen few, the cultured and the erudite. His message, his sayings and teachings, have a special appeal for the poor, the outcaste, the sick and the oppressed. He belongs to all. Anybody can benefit from him. On the firm rock of his spiritual dedication has been built, brick by brick, the Divine Life Society, as we see it today.

It is an institution with a distinction which is related to its founder's distinctive way of life and work. He has shown the way to purify our minds and cultivate a sense of values, even if we are within the limits and temptations of the household life. With a burning desire to spiritualize our work-a-day existence, Swamiji has given us his famous "Twenty Spiritual Instructions."

It is up to us to follow his teachings with faith and tenacity. So long as he is in flesh and blood, so long as he lives and moves amongst us, we can take advantage of the elevating and blissful contact of a living saint and learn from the book of his life. We have so long wasted our life in running after the shadow, instead of the substance. Let us not waste a single moment more but come to the spiritual fold of Swamiji, and pray for his grace.

Unless one empties oneself of all the impurities within, one does not receive the supreme grace of the Guru. But Swamiji is all-merciful; he is a universal friend. He would transmit to others not only the realizations of his mind, but also a part of the strength he has acquired by meditation and other spiritual practices, and, indeed, this has made him so different from the rest of the Sadhus we usually come across.

May God bless Swamiji with a healthful long life, to carry on the noble task to which he has dedicated himself.

PRECIOUS TEACHING ON SELF-PURIFICATION

(Mrs. Kwee Liong Tian-Han, Indonesia)

As the birthday of Swami Sivananda is being celebrated, his wonderful work on Swara Yoga and Kriya Yoga, which my late husband, one of his beloved disciples, had translated into Indonesian, will be in full circulation, I hope, throughout this country. The precious teachings given by him show us the way of self-purification and self-surrender to God, which we need every moment of our life. The magnificent techniques that Swamiji teaches enable us to have clarity of thought, will-power, peace and health, which everybody needs. May the Lord bless Swamiji to continue his service to mankind, to lead us all to the Kingdom of God.

ONE WHO HAS FOUND HIS WAY TO GOD

(Sri Paula Schudel, Switzerland)

A Swiss theologian, Walter Nigg, writes: "One can never try hard enough to find a man who has found his way to God and who possesses the gift of giving spiritual advice. To know such a man to whom one could turn in any situation, is the most precious thing in life." How lucky are we to have found such an individual in the person of Swami Sivananda! He is the one who answers our call in the hour of our need. He not only gives spiritual advice, but heals those who are physically and psychically sick. I know this from experience.

Glory That Is Our Gurudev

(Yogi Anand, Sivanandanagar)

We find that a constant flow of people from all parts of India and from many other countries of the world pouring into this corner of the Himalayas.

We wonder why, since many of them, who are in good positions, with all comforts and conveniences, come to this place willingly to suffer various types of hardships through lack of modern amenities,—some for a short time, others for a longer time, and yet others who choose to remain here for the rest of their life.

What could be so appealing? Is it only the search for spiritual knowledge? If so, this knowledge could be found in so many other places. But they continue to come here, all the same.

The answer is obvious: first, to meet a living, renowned saint who has a unique method of teaching, and secondly, to learn some of the noble ideals of life, at first hand, in his sacred company.

Swamiji's methods are, however, such that the aspirant is left to himself most of the time, which is an appreciable thing, as one can understand oneself easier when left alone, not interfered with, rather than through conditioning with the views of others. Most people at heart desire to free themselves from the conditioning of many aspects of a worldly life, and even philosophical dialectics, which bring about an in-

ner emptiness, in spite of apparent satisfaction.

Swami Sivananda, who is divinely humane, gives his heart to one and all, and it can be easily seen in his daily life, or felt through the medium of his writings, in which there are no reservations or secrets for a chosen few, since he makes the so-called esoteric knowledge easy to understand by his simple style of expression.

Swamiji's compassion and tolerance towards the struggling aspirant are beyond description, and his unexpected, kind gestures give new life, hope and joy instantaneously to a dull and sorrowful face, be it in the form of a simple song, Kirtan, prayer, or offering of a book or Prasad. It may not be so precious in the material sense, but what he gives never fails to touch one's higher nature, bearing as it does the tender charm of a pure being.

In spite of his own personal sufferings in many ways, his heart still expands in giving his life in the service of the distressed peoples of the world, who need his help.

Many a time, at the first meeting with Swamiji, tears of joy flow from the devotee's eyes, while the tears of sorrow within dry up in the saint's presence. Such is the power and glory of our Gurudev. May his grace be always with us, wherever we may be.

SIVANANDA BE PRAISED

(Sri G. Robinson, London)

Religion alone has ever saved the world. It is recognized throughout the world that Swami Sivananda has saved religion. All his work is a hymn of praise of the Divine. He has penetrated every nook and corner with prayer. His influence is man's redeeming factor. With the Divine Life Society he clearly illustrates the pattern to work on. Resolute followers are steadily weaving their communities into praiseworthy societies, attuned to the ideals of the Master. The foundation of the Divine Life Society has given man his chance to rejoice and benefit from.

Poems of Sivananda

ILLUSION HAS A BASIS

Even for an illusion there is a basis.
 There are different grades
 And forms of illusion.
 The world is not an illusion
 As long as there is body-consciousness,
 But the world is an illusion
 When compared to the supreme Reality
 In its undifferentiated condition.
 The rope is the basis
 For the illusion of snake,
 But the rope is there.
 The mother-of-pearl is the basis
 For the illusion of silver,
 But the mother-of-pearl is there.
 Brahman is the basis
 For the illusion of the world,
 But the world is there, as along as
 One has not become the Brahman.

MIND FUSES IN BRAHMAN

Camphor melts in fire,
 And assumes the form of fire.
 When salt is dissolved in water,
 It loses its distinction, its form,
 And water alone remains.
 Even so, the mind that fuses
 With Brahman in Samadhi,
 No longer retains its individuality,
 But is one with cosmic consciousness.
 Annihilation of mind is not
 Blotting out consciousness,
 But individualistic modifications.
 It means annihilation of the lower mind
 In order to consolidate the higher mind,
 So as to perceive the subtle truths
 Of spiritual life therewith,
 Whereupon the higher mind itself,
 In due course, loses its individuality
 In the cosmic consciousness.
 Then the mind is no longer

An individual mind,
 But an indivisible part
 Of the cosmic Mind.

PRACTICAL VEDANTA

Vedanta, in order to benefit one,
 Must be intensely practical.
 Otherwise it is like a mocking ghost
 That helps the aspirant's self-delusion.
 Vedanta must be practised in daily life,
 And talked about as little as needed.
 It must lessen one's selfishness,
 Enable one to share with others
 What one possesses, and feel
 The joys and miseries of others,
 Without being affected by them.
 It must give one balance of mind,
 Detachment and dispassion—
 Not in mental postulations,
 But in the little acts of life.
 It must make one self-restrained,
 Egoless, and absolutely unconcerned
 Of the association of one's
 Little personality with all that goes
 With mundane greatness and glory.
 It must give one equal vision,
 Not for the purpose of reverie,
 But in actual conduct and action.
 Nothing is easier to fool oneself with
 As Vedantic imagination,
 And nothing is more difficult to practise,
 And as sublime and ennobling
 As Vedanta in daily life.

MAKE ME THY INSTRUMENT

O Lord of mercy and compassion,
 Make me Thy humble instrument
 To abide by Thy will,
 To discern Thy Voice as apart
 From the promptings of my ego,
 To purify my heart and balance the mind
 In all conditions of life thou bestoweth,
 And make me a fit receptacle of Thy grace.

Let me plant the seeds of love
 Where there are hatred and jealousy,
 Happiness where there is sorrow,
 Strength where there is weakness,
 Hope where there is despair,
 Thy light where there is darkness,
 Knowledge where there is ignorance,
 Mercy where there is cruelty,

Charity where there is selfishness,
 Goodwill where there is animus,
 Purity where there is sordid sensuality,
 Nobility where there is meanness,
 Forgiveness where there is anger,
 Patience where there is restlessness,
 Amity where there is discord,
 And peace where there is dissension.

OPENING OF SIVANANDASHRAM IN DURBAN

(Sri Logie Naidoo, Zululand)

On the occasion of Swami Sivananda's birthday last year, we witnessed the opening ceremony of the Sivanandashram on the Reservoir Hill, in Durban. Hundreds of devotees had travelled from near and far to be present on that auspicious occasion. It was an unforgettable moment, with colourful scenes. I was very happy to listen to so many interesting anecdotes that some of our spiritual brothers and sisters related regarding their visits to Swami Sivananda at Rishikesh, in India.

Subsequently, I wrote to Swamiji and received his reply immediately. I am one of the happiest persons to have received his spiritual guidance. Contact with Gurudev keeps our minds at rest, and his teachings help us to attain progress towards the divine goal. I am thankful to all the Branches of the Divine Life Society in South Africa for having established the Ashram in Durban. We, of this country, wish our Swamiji a happy birthday, and may he lead us along the path of success and happiness, unity and friendship.

SERVICE OF THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH

(Sri Marija Rzezzycka, Yugoslavia)

Swami Sivananda has done a tremendous work in establishing such a great institution as the Divine Life Society, with numerous Branches all over the world, for the service of the seekers of truth. I bow to him in deepest gratitude for this. His books are most inspiring, unique and very helpful. His life is a sacrifice unto mankind, in general, and to his devotees, in particular. Here is a Jivanmukta who radiates his saintly love to all humanity.

My first experience with Swamiji was very touching. Having got his address, I wrote to him a letter, asking him for information about monastic life in the Himalayas. At first he did not answer my letter, but subsequently came a spate of letters and literature, containing his instructions. His letters are really inspiring and amazing. The great saint and Guru, in spite of so many responsibilities, did not forget me, who is but a little particle of dust under his holy feet. May the Almighty bestow on him choicest, divine blessings.

Architect of Spiritual Life

(Sri Swami Pranavananda, Sivanandanagar)

No single quality could be developed to a maximum degree without a considerable proficiency in the other related qualities, and devoid of a firm foundation. That foundation is discrimination, or right discernment.

Just as it is not correct to expect a school boy to grasp higher mathematical problems, so also it is not right to expect the common masses to grasp abstruse philosophical doctrines, for which a keen and trained intellect is essential.

In the past, the esoteric doctrines of religion and philosophy were confined only to a privileged few, while they were generally denied to the common people. Today, however, things have vastly changed, and esotericism is no longer regarded as something very desirable.

This diffusion of philosophical truths, fundamental religious principles of life, among the masses at large, is the glorious mission of Swami Sivananda. His contribution to the unravelling and moulding of spiritual values and their world-wide dissemination, are unprecedented.

Swamiji has reinterpreted the mysteries of the ancient spiritual lore in the language of the common people and in the spirit of the modern times. He has tremendously helped in the inculcation of the faculties of discrimination, right understanding and spiritual aspiration in us.

Spirituality has a fundamental role to fulfil in human life. The enunciation of its various facets by Swamiji is so lucid and inspiring as to enable us to grasp them correctly, instilling faith in us and ennobling our characters.

There is no single universal standard for all, since people are not alike in their temperaments and mental and spiritual

development. Swamiji teaches the lofty Upanishadic meditations to those who are ready for their practice and realization. He is equally devoted to the incense-wrapped idols, adorning the numerous temples in this holy land, which exercise so vast an influence over simple souls.

In the worship of every image, in the pealing of every temple bell, Swamiji reads a message of spiritual glory, of the attunement of the individual will to God's will, of regeneration of mundane propensities into divine aspiration.

To Swami Sivananda the conflict between religious and philosophic doctrines is but a negation of their true spirit. The monist realizes the ultimate truth through abstract ratiocination, while the devotee arrives at the same goal by the worship of and dedication to its symbolic forms.

As in every walk of life, there are stages in spiritual progress. Through a concrete means one arrives at subtle abstraction. A gross mind is unable to grasp a subtle truth, and has, therefore, to take recourse to a symbolic process of understanding.

Swamiji is a remarkable saint who, having realized the supreme Reality, is ever eager to share his realization with his fellow-beings. His interpretation and the methodology of life's ultimate attainment are multi-faceted and admirably suited to all types of people.

The ripples of Swamiji's influence are spreading in everwidening circles, infusing the spirit of righteousness where there is selfish injustice, candour and sincerity where there is hypocrisy, right means for a right end where wrong means are employed for a dubious end.

His teachings portray living truths instead of regimenting the thoughts of men; they emphasize the imbibing of the spirit of rituals rather than the performance of empty formalities. They stress on the sincerity of heart as we say our prayers, rather than artificially mumbling memorized lines.

Benevolence of outlook, in place of self-centered motivation, is one of the primary injunctions given by Swami Sivananda. The sinners and the distressed, the ignorant and the forlorn, are not denied his help. He responds in a way that is best suited to help their troubled hearts and seeking souls.

He infuses culture in the uncultured, character in the degenerate, courage in the timid, selflessness in the self-centred, humility in the arrogant, straightforwardness in the crooked, and a sense of dignity in the desolate and the down-trodden.

According to Swami Sivananda, the heart and the mind must have a harmonious and commensurate development. We must grow in the richness of our feelings as in the keenness of our intellectual perception. Not only should we find a reason for our feelings, but a feeling for our reasons.

Swamiji's spirit of service to the people is unique. He treats us courteously, understands our feelings, judges our actions impartially, and creates a sense of betterment in us. The protecting force of Swamiji's grace from the influences of the evil, is always very reassuring to his disciples.

Swamiji is the architect of our spiritual house. We can expect the best architecture of a house only from a master-builder. Equipped with his vast experiences, the great architect, Swami Sivananda, builds our spiritual abode with the bricks of his rational teachings and the cement of his benign grace.

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5. *The New Age Interpreter*, 1244 Cerro Gordo St., Los Angeles 26, USA.

Questions and Answers

(Sri Swami Sivananda).

The Atman is different from the body and is not affected by the latter's doings. The body is reborn a number of times according to its Karma, and goes through life and death as per the supreme Will. If this is so, then who goes to hell or heaven?

The real experiencer of anything, in an individualistic way, is neither the Self or the Paramatman, nor the physical body. It is the mind that is the centre of individuality, that which individualizes and imprisons a ray of the Atman, otherwise called the individual soul, and it is this, as embodied in the subtle body, that undergoes the pleasure of heaven or the pains of hell, or, for that matter, any experience through a gross or subtle body.

The mind appears to have consciousness on account of there being a ray of the Atman in it, in the form of a reflection, very much limited by its own constitution. Hence it will be clear that the individuality of a person is as much real or unreal as a reflection of a real object.

Though everything happens according to the supreme Will, the Karma of the individual determines the form of the shape of the experience that is to be had under the Dispensation of this Will. It is not the Atman or the body that has any type of relative experience (though the body is a gross means); it is the mind that has all this.

Why do Hindus give more importance to the 'Bhagavadgita,' instead of the Uttara-Gita?

Bhagavadgita is more comprehensive and detailed in the exposition of the philosophy and teaching of Sri Krishna; rather, it is a *magnum opus* among the scriptures of the Hindus, and so, in substance and

scope, it is more important than the *Uttara-Gita* (also of Sri Krishna). But, please note that there are many *Gitas*, such as the *Anu-Gita*, *Avadhuta-Gita* and so on, all of which are helpful to the spiritual aspirant. Yet, among all the *Gitas*, quite a few dozens of them, major and minor ones, the *Bhagavadgita* is the most important, synthetic, comprehensive and the best.

Why suicide is considered a sin?

Pleasure and pain in life are the rewards of good and bad actions of an individual, respectively. If a man suffers, it is a reminder to him to ennoble his life and make his future happy through the performance of good deeds, self-discipline and right effort.

When a person, convicted to a term of imprisonment by the court of law for having committed an offence, escapes from the prison, the law demands that he should be rearrested and given added punishment, because he had not only committed an offence but tried to avoid the punishment thereof. So is the case with trying to escape from one's suffering by inflicting death on oneself, rather than attempting through self-effort to improve one's future, or accept philosophically what is beyond all help.

One has, besides, no right to take a life, even though it may be his own, since it is a crime not only in the eyes of God but also in the eyes of social law. The person who commits suicide will suffer more in a spirit-body for a period of time, and then take a lower form of birth, to work out his Karma. So, one will not be benefited in any way by committing suicide.

I want to take initiation into 'Saptavarsha Praya Chandika.'

Initiation into any special form of Devi

worship (not the common forms of Devi worship) should be got only from a Guru who has attained Siddhi or perfection in that form of worship. Besides, the special forms of Devi worship, with Bija Mantras and Yantras, demand scrupulous observance

of the Niyamas or cleanliness of the mind, body, the clothes one wears during worship, the things one touches before worship, the food one eats, unfailing regularity, and, especially, the place of worship.

LIST OF SIVANANDA SCHOOLS OF YOGA AND SIVANANDASHRAMS

SIVANANDA SCHOOLS OF YOGA

1. DENMARK: In-charge: Sri Aage Faergmann, Raagaards Minde 7, Copenhagen.

2. GERMANY: Swami Omprananda, Eisenacherstrasse, West Berlin.

3. GERMANY: Sri Narayan W. Saraf, Kielortalle 9, Hamburg.

4. SWITZERLAND: Col. Louis Willimann, Schlossweg 11, Luzern.

5. SWITZERLAND: Sri Lise Taillard, Ley Myosotis, Montona.

6. ITALY: Sri Marcelle Marconi, Via Panaro, Rome.

7. CANADA: Swami Vishnudevananda, Sivananda Yoga-Vedanta Centre, 2029 Stanley Street, Montreal. (Branches in Ottawa, New York, Minneapolis and San Francisco.)

8. BRAZIL: Sri Jean Pierre Bastiou, Sivananda School of Yoga, 117, Apt., 804 Leblon, General Urquiza Road, Rio de Janeiro.

9. INDIA: Sivananda School of Yoga, Rasipuram, Dist. Salem, Madras.

SIVANANDASHRAMS

1. INDIA: Sivanandashram, Ettayapuram, Dist. Tirunelveli, Madras.

2. Sivanandashram, Pattamadai, Dist. Tirunelveli, Madras.

3. Sivananda Tapovanam, Rishikesh, U.P.

4. Sivanandashram, Chevendrapalam,

Dist. Krishna, Andhra Pradesh (In-charge: Swami Satchidananda).

5. Sivananda Anbashram, Kadayam, Dist. Tirunelveli, Madras (Swami Krishnananda).

6. Sivananda Sevashram, 3 Kambar Street, Tambaram, Madras.

7. Sivanandashram, Vadavi, Kalol, Ahmedabad (Sri Ambalal Master).

8. Sivananda Mutt, 2 Srinivasachari Street, Perambur, Madras (Sri K.H. Sankaranarayan).

9. CEYLON: Sivananda Tapovanam, Tirukoleswarar Street, Trincomalee.

10. MALAYA: Sivanandashram, Batu Caves, Kuala Lumpur.

11. EAST AFRICA: Sivanandashram, Post Box No. 55, Quilemane, Portuguese East Africa.

12. SOUTH AFRICA: Sivanandashram, 38 First Avenue, Durban.

13. FRANCE: Sivanandashram, 76 rue de Petit Vaux, Epinay-sur-Orge, Seine-et-Oise (Swami Ananda, alias Paul Guerillot).

14. MEXICO: Sivananda Aryavarta Ashram, Apartado Postale 78-58, Mexico City.

15. CANADA: Sivanandashram, 6591 Marlborough Avenue, South Burnaby, Vancouver.

16. INDIA: Sivanandashram, Krishnanagar, Chakrota Road, Dehra Dun, U.P.

Uniqueness of the Gospel of Gurudev

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

The soul-elevating and life-transforming gospel of Sri Gurudev, now diffused nearly all over the modern world, have brought about among large sections of people a remarkable awakening to the lofty spiritual purpose of life, while pointing out to them the fundamentals of noble idealism, and the ways and means of their realization in and through the world.

Long, long ago, in the dim and distant past, nearly four thousand years before, in what is called the Vedic age, were implanted the seeds of spiritual culture of this holy land. The great Vedic call of enlightened sages, like Vyasa, Vasishtha and others, was then sounded, and in this call constituted the basic elements in the structure of our culture, righteousness being the way of life, and God-realization its ultimate goal.

Through the corridors of centuries, many changes have taken place in our country, as in the rest of the world. Various external influences and indigenous factors have contributed to the shaping of the different phases of the Indian culture, such as the advent of the Buddha, the inroads of foreign occupations, and it has undergone many transformations, though all the while retaining its basic outlook.

During the last nine hundred years or so, Indian culture had to pass through a number of crises; it absorbed so many strains that were alien to it, and had to build up so many barricades within its framework so as to protect itself from obliteration through strong influences from outside. What are considered as many of the negative aspects of our culture today had their genesis in this period, at least quite a few of them.

There were, of course, occasional flashes of brilliance, and spurts of religious enthusiasm and awareness, but the spiritual element in the life of the people, generally speaking, steadily corroded, and the voice of our ancient saints and seers began to sound faint and distant, and were often confused with interpolations that were born of frustration and bigotry.

Therefore it was as though our ancient seers, the immortal souls of our culture, out of their compassion for us, desired that their call might once again be rung out, that the same note, the same call to humanity, to partake of the glorious spiritual experience of divine realization, be once again voiced forth.

As though as an answer to their hearts' wish, God has sent amidst us a unique spiritual messenger in the person of Gurudev, who treasures within himself the voice of the Divine, the voice of the enlightened seers of the Upanishadic age, and who is eminently capable of understanding the trends of the modern times, and reinterpret the ancient teachings according to the needs and the spirit of our era.

We find in Sri Gurudev's gospel the voice of the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, the *Brahmasutras*, once again resounding clear and urgent in our ears, so that we could regain what we have lost through the stresses of past centuries, reshape our lives according to the ideals of divine realization, and raise ourselves from the level of instinctive, animal life that we commonly lead, to that of what is really human and rationalistic, to that of what is ultimately divine and spiritual.

The gospel of Gurudev, commented

upon by many writers in the preceding pages, has come at a time, when more than ever we are in need of it, when we are rushing headlong towards the abyss of materialism, so that our aspirations would be turned towards a noble, spiritual objective, towards Dharma and godliness, so that we might save ourselves from the folly of misdirecting the powers of modern science and technology, rather than dictating and harnessing them for universal good.

It is not only the reinterpretation of the voice of the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma-sutras* and the *Gita* that marks out Gurudev as a unique spiritual teacher, but it is his realization of the supreme truth, embodied in them, through practical experience.

Our divine Master is unique in another respect as a teacher of the masses all over the world. He has delved deep into the teachings of all the great saints and sages belonging to different religions and times and climes, in order to bring about a beautiful synthesis of their essential points. His teachings are, therefore, universal in scope.

In India there are a number of spiritual traditions, and, though within the fold of Hinduism, they have not so far substantially coalesced with one another. There are traditions of the great Tamil saints—the Nayanars and Alvars—the saints of Bengal, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Sindh, Punjab and so on, each group of them eliciting the allegiance of their respective linguistic regions.

There has been little of intermingling of the traditions of these regions, and the saints of one region, though by their names known in another, did not reach out to

the people outside their areas of influence through their teachings, because India is a multi-lingual country and the teachings of the regional saints are mostly in the languages of the regions.

Gurudev has done a unique service to the people of India through making available to them a synthetic combination of the teachings of most of the great saints of this country, by the means of a common language, as also by inter-vernacular translation of his works, and has brought about a beautiful unification of the diverse teachings that are scattered over the various parts of this sub-continent. He has thus given a great common heritage to the India of the twentieth century, and passed it on to the rest of the world.

Our Master's gospel is neither Vaishnavite, nor Saivite, neither Vedantic nor Tantrik, neither Yogic nor Pauranik, in the exclusive sense. It represents a beautiful unification of all philosophical trends, religious cults and spiritual ecstasies, not only of this land, but of the whole world, in their essential perspectives. His gospel represents a combination of the spiritual approaches and experiences of all saints and seers.

Gurudev has flooded the world through this gospel of unique synthesis of all that is sublime in spiritual thought and experience, and the only name that could be given to it is the 'Gospel of Divine Life.' Through this he has effected a new spiritual dawn in the midst of materialistic darkness. By enthrading the choicest flowers from the gardens of different religious traditions and philosophical thoughts, he has made a unique spiritual garland for all humanity to wear.

Three Aspects of the Divine Mother

(Navaratri Message of Swami Sivananda)

The annual nine-day worship of the Divine Mother is a national festival in this country. In Eastern India it is called Durga Puja, and in Southern India and elsewhere it is known as Navaratri Puja.

On the first three days, Durga, the consort of Siva, representing the cosmic Power of the Lord, and adored as the Mother of the universe, is worshipped.

The next three days are devoted to Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, who is the Goddess of Wealth, material and spiritual, representing auspiciousness and benevolence, and adored as the presiding Deity of all Hindu households.

The last three days are devoted to Saraswati, the consort of Brahma, who is the Goddess of Learning, representing the highest excellence in the knowledge of different forms of art, including literature, music, classical dancing, sculpture, painting and so on, and specially adored by all students.

To the spiritual aspirant, Navaratri is an occasion for intense Sadhana, and re-dedication of oneself to the Divine Mother—praying for the destruction of the animal within (as Durga killed Mahishasura or the 'Buffalo Demon'), and sublimation of one's nature.

It is an occasion for resolving to a concerted effort for the cultivation of the auspicious qualities characteristic in divine life. It is also an occasion for self-surrender and prayer for enlightenment.

The allegorical import of the warfare between the gods and the demons, described in the *Devi Purana*, pertains to the eternal conflict between the higher mind and the lower mind, between the forces of noble sentiments, or the urgings of the

conscience, and the lower impulses, or the urgings of the senses.

In the warfare between the gods and the demons, the former, being overwhelmed by the superior physical power of the latter, sought the help of the all-powerful Divine Mother, who ultimately won a decisive victory over the redoubtable armies of the demons, in order to save the gods from humiliating subjugation.

Similarly, in the case of the spiritual aspirant, while he has to strive his utmost for vanquishing the forces of his lower nature, success is ultimately possible only through divine grace. His little individuality, however strong the urgings of the conscience, will be of no consequence in overpowering the deep-rooted worldly tendencies, without the grace from above, which, nevertheless, is effective only in the case of those who are intensely sincere and persevering, but would refuse to penetrate the hard crust of indolence, insincerity and inadequacy of faith.

Durga is the giver of victory in the battle of self-discipline, Lakshmi is the bestower of inner spiritual wealth, and Saraswati endows the aspirant with the highest wisdom.

Thus, by the grace of the Divine Mother, who is really one but appears to Her devotees in different forms and represents Her divine agency in these three principal aspects, all spiritual aspirants, renunciates as well as householders, can undoubtedly attain victory in their daily battle of life, and rapidly progress on the path of God-realization.

May the Blessed Mother be gracious to shower Her benedictions to one and all, deserving and undeserving.

Some Observations on the Palm of Sivananda

(Sri N.G. Ghosh Hazra, New Delhi)

I had the privilege of reading the palm of His Holiness Swami Sivananda. His palms are square, with medium-size, well-set fingers. He is of an idealistic and philosophic type. The mental aspect is the strongest in him. There is a wide space between the thumb and the upper side of the palm. This denotes that, although he is practical, he has unbounded generosity of heart. The formation of the back side of the palm signifies that he is a strict disciplinarian, but not haughty by temperament.

The palm is soft, but very dry. This shows his detachment, though he has love for all. The trident on the palm indicates lordliness. The peacock mark on the left hand pertains to the characteristics of Kartikeya. The mounts are raised except in the case of Mars which is low, and Venus which is flat. Flatness of Venus tells of his ability to suppress emotions arising out of (on account of the lowness of Mars) displeasure and criticism from some quarters. The prominence of the other mounts indicates maximum success in their respective scopes. There are whirls, Chakras, and 38 lines on the fingers. This combination is rare, and found only in those who have supernatural powers. His fingers speak of his love of literature and science.

The life line indicates his longevity to be around 85. The tasselled formations at the beginning of the line show that he had to undergo severe trials. This line bespeaks of his high integrity, good principles and the capacity to understand the suffering of others. His universal love is denoted by the setting of his heart line. The line is broad and prominent, and ascends to the Jupiter mount, showing the spiritual qua-

lity of his heart and dedication to humanitarian activity.

The head line droops to the mount of Moon, which means that he will always be guided by his own thoughts. He has double head line, indicating that he is gifted with a mighty brain. Since this is forked in two darts at the end, his intelligence will work in two directions. The beautiful sun line shows that he is a man of good education and has literary ability of a high order. This line also shows that he will be a Guru of the people belonging to many lands, and attain supreme peace. The spiritual lines on the mount of Mercury has endowed him with divine inspiration. His association with women is based on spiritual relationship.

The fate line starts from the lunar mount. This denotes that his career is guided by the goodwill of the people, as also by virtue of his own merits. There are clear indications that in the latter part of his life he will receive abundant support from others for service to humanity through dissemination of spiritual knowledge and alleviation of the suffering of the people. The fate line reveals that Saturn is favourable to him always. There is a triangle between the head line and the heart line, with the fate line as the basis, indicating his great fortune.

He has high-class, intuitive knowledge and is a mystic, as shown by the structure of the line of intuition. The shape of the girdle of Venus denotes that he has a high power of imagination, and love of art and all that is beautiful. There is also a triangle on the mount of Jupiter, and a ring of Solomon on the same mount. These, along with the ascending heart line, show that he is a rare divine soul.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES' SUPPLEMENT: GERMAN, FRENCH, SPANISH, DANISH AND HUNGARIAN

Practice of Concentration and Meditation

(Swami Sivananda's Message translated into German and recorded on gramophone plate by Otto Wilhelm Barth-Verlag)

Om. Zur Rechten ist Om, zur Linken ist Om, oben ist Om, vorne ist Om, hinten ist Om, unten ist Om—Om ist überall.

Alle grossen Religionen der Welt verkünden den einen Gott, ein ewiges unsterbliches kosmisches Wesen, voller Segen und Frieden. Dieses Wesen ist, glaube mir, nicht weit von dir. Es wohnt in dem Tempel deines Körpers, im Innersten deines Herzens als schweigender Zeuge deines Denkens. Von Heiligen und Weisen, von Yogis, Philosophen und Propheten auf erhabenste Weise besungen, kann es durch Übungen des Yoga in allen Verwirklichung erlangen.

Keine noch so vielstelligen Nullen haben Wert an sich, es sei denn, es wurde ihnen die Zahl eins davorgesetzt. In gleicher Weise bedeutet der Reichtum der drei Welten nichts, wenn du nicht ein geistiges Leben führst und nach Selbstverwirklichung strebst. Du mußt in der Seele, dem innersten Selbst leben. Du mußt dem hiesigen Leben Atma-Jnana hinzufügen. So sprach der Herr Jesus: "Trachtet zuerst nach dem Reich Gottes und nach seiner Gerechtigkeit, so wird euch solches alles zufallen."

Du verfügst in deinem Inneren über eine Fülle von Kräften, kannst andere beeinflussen, Freude und Frieden über Millionen von Menschen in nah und fern ausstrahlen. Du kannst selbst aus weitester Entfernung andere erfreuen, deine machtvollen, die Seele erhebenden, segensreichen Gedanken auf andere übertragen, da du ein Bild Gottes, dein Gott selbst bist, sobald der Schleier der Unwissenheit zerrissen ist. Die Welt ist eine grosse Schule der Erziehung. Taglich

lernst du verschiedene wertvolle Aufgaben. Bist du weise genug, um alle Gelegenheiten im Geiste des Yoga zu nutzen, dann werden deine Fähigkeiten und Willenskraft sich zu einer erstaunlichen Höhe entwickeln. Du wirst wachsen, dich ganzheitlich entfalten und vorwärtsschreiten zu deinem Ziel. Alle Schleier werden aufgehoben, alle Fesseln und Bindungen gelöst. Du wirst mehr und mehr an göttlichem Lichte, an göttlicher Weisheit und Reinheit, an Frieden und geistiger Kraft empfangen. Du bist der Schmied deines Schicksals. Du hast es dir selbst geschaffen. Du allein bist dafür verantwortlich. Du bist der Bildner deiner Freude und deiner Sorgen. Du hast einen Kerker aus Fleisch durch deine eigenen Handlungen, Anziehungen, Abstossungen oder durch falsche Ichsucht aufgebaut. Du bist der Sklave des Fleisches geworden, Sklave deines Körpers und Geistes, Sklave zahlloser Wünsche. Doch mache dir keinen Kummer! Eine herrliche strahlende Zukunft erwartet dich. Versuche diesem falschen Gefängnis der Tauschungen noch in diesem Augenblick zu entinnen. Wenn dein Versuch wahr und ernsthaft ist, wenn du mit aller Kraft nach Erreichung dieses Zieles trachtest, dann wirst du durch Gottes Gnade diese dunklen Wolken der Unwissenheit zerreißen und in deinen wahren göttlichen Farben in deiner ursprünglichen Herrlichkeit aufscheinen. Erwache zu der bewussten Verwirklichung deiner tatsächlichen Einheit mit dem höchsten Selbst. Denke unaufhörlich an das Selbst. Sei mutig in diesem Kampf, ernsthaft in deinem Bestreben. Wenn deine Triebfedern rein sind, deine Zucht hart, eisern dein Entschluss,

dein Wille, deine geistige Übung, dann wirst du ohne Hindernisse die endgültige Seng-keit erlangen.

Intellektuelles Verstandnis allein wird dir hierbei nicht helfen. Du musst deine Einheit mit dem Hochsten Selbst wirklich fühlen und sie durch Intuition erfahren. Deine Nachbarn müssen tatsächlich spüren, dass du ein völlig verwandelter Mensch geworden bist, ein Übermensch. So wie die Rose ihren Duft ausstrahlt, so wird von dir ein süßer geistiger Duft ausgehen. Warte nicht länger. Zögere nicht, vergeude keinen Augenblick mehr. Du wirst mit jeder Stunde alter. Drei Dinge sind selten in dieser Welt: die menschliche Geburt, die Sehnsucht nach Befreiung und die umsorgende Hilfe eines vollendeten Weisen. Du hast durch Gottes Gnade diese drei empfangen. Ernte, solange die Sonne scheint. Trinke an der göttlichen Quelle in tiefen Zügen den Nektar der Unsterblichkeit, indem du regelmäsig Meditation ubst. Die Meditation folgt der Konzentration, die Konzentration mündet in die Meditation ein. In der Konzentration sammeln sich die Gedanken auf einen ganz bestimmten Gegenstand. Die Meditation ist der unaufhorliche Fluss der Erkenntnis, der in den Meditierenden einströmt. Meditation öffnet das Tor des Geistes der intuitiven Weisheit. Sie schenkt dir eine Fülle von Kräften. Du vermagst durch Meditation zu erreichen, was immer du verlangst.

Ich werde dir jetzt einige Anweisungen

zur Meditation geben. Ich werde dich auf den geistigen Pfad fuhren und dir helfen. Aber beschreiten musst du ihn allein.

Nimm dir ein eigenes Zimmer zur Meditation. Erlaube niemand es zu betreten. Brenne Weihrauch und wasche deine Fusse, ehe du den Raum betrittst. Nun ziehe dich in dieses Zimmer oder an einen anderen stillen Ort zuruck, an dem du keine Störung befurchten musst, so dass deine Gedanken Ruhe und Sicherheit finden können. Natürlich sind die idealen Bedingungen nicht immer zu erfüllen. Dann tue das Bestmögliche. Sei immer allein mit dir in der Kommunikation mit Gott.

Brahmamuhurt, die Zeit swischen vier und sechs am Morgen, ist am besten für die Übung der Meditation. Abends meditiere noch einmal von sieben bis acht Uhr.

Stelle im Meditationsraum das dir liebste Bild Gottes auf. Es können dort auch einige religiöse Bucher wie die Gita oder die Bibel liegen, in denen du ein bis zwei Seiten lesen kannst, ehe du mit der Meditation beginnst. So wird der Strom der Gedanken eine andere Richtung nehmen. Breite einen kleinen Teppich vor dem Bild aus. Nimm Padmasan oder die dir liebste Meditationsstellung ein. Halte Kopf, Hals und Ruckgrat in einer geraden Linie. Lass dich weder nach vorn noch nach hinten fallen. Wirf dich in Gedanken vor deinem Guru nieder. Sprich die Hymne zum Lobe des Gurus oder andere, die dir vertraut sind.

(End of the first side of the plate)

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Sivananda Publication League, P.O. Sivanandanagar, (via Rishikesh), U.P.

Swami Sivananda Singt

(Translated into German from 'In the Hours of Communion' by Swami Vedantananda 'alias' Serapia Devi)

NICHTS IST MEIN

O Herr

Du bist auf ewig meine Zuflucht.

Du, der die Schwachen schuttest,

Sei Sivananda gnädig

Und bilde ihn

Zum Dir auf ewig ganz ergebenen Liebenden.

Ich weihs nicht wie Dir dienen,

Mein Leben kann ich Dir nicht schenken

Da es ja Dein.

Nichts das ich um mich sehe nenn ich mein

Und nichts gehört mir an.

Dieses Erkennen biete ich Dir dar, O Herr.

Ja, Sivananda sagt:

Ich weihs nicht was ich Dir für Deine Gaben

Als Gegengabe geben soll.

UND DER CHATAKVOGEL STIRBT

Ohne Wasser verdorrt das Korn,

Und der Chatak Vogel stirbt

Wenn der Regen nicht fällt.

Der Lotus verwelkt ohne Wasser

Und der Fisch, dem kühlen Nahse entrissen,

Verschmachtet.

Das keusche Weib es vergeht

Wenn ihr Gemahl in der Ferne;

Das Kind schluchzt wenn es die Mutter vermisst.

Die Trennung von Dir, mein Geliebter

Bringt Schmerzen und Tod.

Doch der Tod vereint mich mit Dir

O mein suhser Geliebter

Das sagt Sivananda.

TU MIT MIR WAS DIR GEFALLT

Selbst wenn Du mich von Dir fortjagen
wolltest

Fortjagen von Deiner Tür

Ich wurde Dich doch nicht verlassen

Nimmermehr von Dir lassen.

Dir nur hab ich mein Herz gegeben;

Tu mit mir was Dir gefällt.

Um deinetwegen verlieh ich ja alles,

Alles verlieh ich für Dich nur allein.

Zu Dir nur hab ich Vertrauen

Verwirf mich nicht, Herr

Mein Retter bist Du, und kein Anderer,

Wo konnt ich wohl hingehn von Dir

Da ich ganzlich nur Dein?

So spricht zum Herrn, Sivananda.

FUHR MICH DEM ZIELE ZU

O Sonne meiner Seele

Und allen Lichtes Licht,

Gutiger Guru Meister

Zeig mir den Weg zu Dir.

Lahs meine Willenskraft

In Deinem Willen aufgehn,

Fuhr mich dem Ziele zu,

Erhebe meinen Geist

Und schenk mir Deine Huld.

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Light-Power-Wisdom

(Translated into French by Sri E. Arenberg and issued by Sri Sivananda-Margarita through the EDLS, Trogen, Switzerland)

**FAITES AUX AUTRES CE QUE VOUS
VOUDRIEZ QU'ON VOUS FIT**

Tous les phenomenes de la nature sont gouvernes par une loi importante: celle de la cause et de l'effet, la loi du Karma, C'est cette loi qui maintient l'harmonie interieure et l'ordre logique de l'univers. Aucune phenomene n'echappe a l'operation de cette loi puissante.

La cause est liee a l'effet et l'effet a la cause. Ce monde suit son cours d'apres cette loi fondamentale, vitale. C'est une loi inexorable et immuable.

Toute action doit reagir a votre egard avec une force et un effet qui lui sont egaux. Si vous faites du bien a un autre homme, en realite vous vous aidez vous-meme. Car il n'y a rien d'autre que le Soi. "Atma-vaïdam Sarvam," c'est la declaration emphatique des Srutis ou des Upanishads. Cette action vertueuse reagira sur vous avec une force et un effet tout pareils. Elle vous apportera joie et bonheur.

DEBOUT! AU TRAVAIL!

Le pouvoir de la priere est indescriptible. Sa gloire est ineffable. Seuls les devots sincerés en realisent l'utilite et la splendeur.

Ne restez pas assis paresseusement en implorant l'aide de Dieu, mais levez-vous et agissez. Dieu aide ceux qui s'aident eux-memes. Faites de votre mieux et laissez le reste a Dieu.

Servez les devots. Demeurez en leur compagnie. Faites Japa et Kirtan (repetition d'un Mantra et chant). Etudiez la Bhagavad Gita. Vous aurez bientôt de la devotion.

PRATIQUEZ AHIMSA

Le but de la vie est la realisation de Dieu. N'oubliez jamais cela. Aspirez incessamment a recevoir Sa grace. Ayez soif de Son Darshan. Ayez constamment Sat-sang (la compagnie de Sages). Vous le realiserez.

Pratiquez Ahimsa (la non-violence). Dites la verite. Ayez foi en Dieu. Faites tout pour l'amour de Lui (Ishwararpanam). Servez inlassablement. Priez avec une entiere devotion. Lutte avec le mental et les Indriyas (sens). Tournez-les vers Dieu. Pleurez d'etre separe de Dieu. Vous aurez Son Darshan. Sentez que le Seigneur travaille par vos mains, voit par vos yeux, entend par vos oreilles. Vous deviendrez un etre tout different. Vous aurez un nouveau point de vue. Vous pourrez du bonheur supreme.

**SOYEZ BON. TENDEZ VERS LE PUR
AMOUR**

Extrayez l'essence de tous les Ecrits importants ou humbles, ainsi que l'abeille le fait pour les fleurs. Abandonnez les espoirs vains, les mauvais desirs et refugiez-vous aupres du Dieu supreme.

Percevez dans tous les objets l'immanence de Dieu. Soyez bon et compatissant pour vos inferieurs amical pour vos egaux et respectueux pour vos superieurs.

Acquerez la richesse de Vairagya. Rafraichissez votre esprit par la felicite du Soi. Rejouissez-vous dans la douceur de la serenite due a la suppression des Vasanas (desirs subconscients) et a l'aurore de Tattwa-Gyana (l'element inne de la Sagesse).

L'amour est la voie immediate vers la Verite ou le Royaume de Dieu est le vaste domaine de la joie et de la paix eternelles. Il est le principe vital de la creation. Il etait la force qui entraînait Mira, Tukaram et Gauranga,

C'est pourquoi vous devez tendre vers l'amour pur et desinteresse. L'amour pur est chose rare.

Cultivez-le par degre. Toutes vos qua-

lites negatives, telles que l'antipathie, le prejudice seront effacees. L'amour est le grand purificateur de l'esprit.

Renoncez a toutes sortes de croyances erronees, faiblesses, superstitions, notions fausses, idees d'impossibilite. Vivez dans l'amour. Attachez-vous fermement a la foi dans la Vie divine. Aspirez avec ferveur et constance a vivre dans le Divin. Vous jouirez de la joie supreme.

Sayings of Sivananda

(Translated into Spanish by Sri Susano Ortiz, Puerto Rico)

1. Dios nada mas existe. Todo lo demas es vanidad.

2. No hay derecho exclusivos en Dios. Su propiedad es para el usufructo universal.

3. Toda la creacion es la gran familia de Dios.

4. Toda la humanidad es una en substancia.

5. La libertad y la paz son nuestros dos pies.

6. Esa suprema fuente de vida es Dios.

7. Dios esta mas alla de la humana imaginacion, pero El es una Realidad viviente.

8. Ese algo que esta mas alla de la invencion de los cientificos es Dios.

El Silencio es su lenguaje.

9. Adiestrate en el lenguaje de Dios.

10. La Religion no es otra cosa que el amor a Dios.

11. La moralidad es la puerta que lleva a la Religion.

12. La Hipocresia que se cubre con el manto de la religion es un crimen.

13. El cuerpo humano es un mundo en miniatura.

14. El hombre es una trinidad de cuerpo, mente y alma.

15. La vida y la muerte son dos es-

cenas en el drama de la vida.

16. El progreso es la ley de la vida.

17. Todos los placeres mundanos perecen nectar al principio, pero al fin se convierten en veneno virulento.

18. Que huera es la vida mundana! No confies en los sentidos.

19. Pildoras amargas tienen efectos benditos.

20. Dios prueba muy severamente a aquellos a quienes desea bendecir.

21. El lujo es el enemigo de la paz.

22. La bondad es el camino que conduce a la felicidad.

23. La buena conducta es la causa de la felicidad.

24. El dolor es el resultado del pecado; la felicidad es la recompensa de la virtud.

25. Ni la riqueza ni la jerarquia aseguran la felicidad.

26. La felicidad se encuentra dentro de si mismo.

27. La sabiduria, no la riqueza, es el camino.

28. El habito de desear bien a todos enriquece la vida.

29. Sacrifica el dinero por el principio.

30. El lujo es pobreza artificial.
31. La Gracia Divina es el mas grande tesoro que tiene la vida.
32. El Yoga confiere el dominio de si mismo.
33. Existe una panacea para todos los males: el Nombre de Dios.
34. El Nombre del Senor es elixir, ambrosia y divino nectar.
35. Repite el Nombre del Senor con cada respiracion.
36. Entroniza a Dios en tu corazon.
37. Cuando tu amas a Dios, tu amas a todo el mundo.
38. La oracion es el esfuerzo que hace el hombre para ponerse en comunion con Dios.
39. La oracion puede mover montañas.
40. Soy Tuyo. Todo es Tuyo. Esta es la mejor oracion.
41. Deja que la oracion sea la base de tu vida.
42. La vida es corta. El tiempo vuela. Ejercitate y ora.
43. Olvida el pasado. Empieza una nueva vida.
44. Encarate con la vida con intrepidez. Un futuro glorioso te espera.
45. No caigas victima de males y enfermedades imaginarias.
46. Se fuerte. Se valeroso. Nada podra obstruir tu paso.
47. No hay nada mas infeccioso que la depresion.
48. Confia en tu intuicion que nunca te fallara.
49. Se sereno. Tente firme.
50. Preparate. Vive como si te fueras a morir ahora mismo.
51. Haz o muerete.
52. Cumple con tu deber bien, sinceramente. Tus privilegios vendran sin pedirlos.
53. Haz lo mejor que puedas y deja el resto en manos de Dios.
54. Si deseas ser fuerte, se puro.
55. No te dejes llevar de las fuerzas demoniacas de la malicia y del odio.
56. La mentira es cambio, deteriora y muerte.
57. Las formas son imaginaciones. La verdad esta mas alla de las formas.
58. Una verdad amargaes mejor que una dulce mentira.
59. Es mejor perder que hacer trampas.
60. Tu pensamiento debe concordar con tu palabra y tu palabra con tu accion.
61. Una mente culpable siempre sospecha de los demas.
62. Quien siembra bondades cosecha amores.
63. El amor no juzga ni condena.

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Meditations of Sivananda

(Translated into Danish by Sri E. Sodring and issued by
the Sivananda School of Yoga, Copenhagen, Denmark)

LIVSERFARINGEN

Livet er Erfaring.

Det er Erfaring gennem Sanserne.

Erfaringen stotter sig til "Jeg".

Man siger: "Jeg ser, jeg horer, jeg spiser,
jeg ved."

Uden "Jeg", er der ingen Erfaring.

Denne Erfaring er forgængelig og illusorisk;

Men Erfaringen som er evig.

Den er uendelig, uforanderlig og guddom-
melig.

VEJEN TIL LYKKE

Vær tolerant

Vær tilgivende

Vær hojsindet

Vær modig

Vær medlidende

Vær ydmyg

Vær rolig

Vær selvbehersket.

Vær takksom

Dette er Vejen til Lyksalighed.

LAERERENS NAADE

Lærerens Naade er grænselos.

Han holdt mig ved Armen og frelste mig.

Læreren velsignede mig,

Han fyldte mit Hjerte med Lykke,

Han viste mig Vejen,

Han fjernede mange Faldgruber og Snarer,

Han oploftede og inspirerede mig

Fra Trældommen, Hjulet af Fodsel og Dod.

DEN PERSONLIGE LAERER

En Begynder maa have en personlig Lærer
forst.

Han kan ikke have GUD til Lærer til at begy-
nde med.

Han maa have et rent Sind,

Han maa være etisk fuldkommen,

Han maa være stærkt dydig,

Han maa være naaet over Kropsbevidsthed,

Kun da kan han have GUD til Lærer.

JEG ER EVIGT LIV

Jeg er DET jeg er

Jeg er absolut Bevidsthed

Jeg er lutter Glæde

Jeg er fuldkommen Lykke

Jeg er ren Fornuft

Jeg er EVIGT LIV

Jeg er Uendelighed, Evighed, Udodelighed.

Jeg er SANDHED, VISDOM og LYS.

GUD ER DIN LEDER

GUD er din oprigtige Leder.

HAN leder dig frem ad Stierne, du ikke
kender.

HAN griber dine Hænder paa Vejen

HAN lofter dig op,

Naar du vakler og falder.

HAN leder dine Trin

I Storme og Morke.

HAN opmuntrer og ansporer dig
ved Fortvivlelse og Modloshed.

HVAD ER SATTWA?

Sattwa er Renhed

Sattwa er Harmoni

Sattwa er Fred

Sattwa er Oplysning

Sattwa er Lys

Sattwa er Visdom

Sattwa er et aandeligt Mikroskop

Til at opdage fine Forekomster.

Til at opdage GUD

Til at opfange oversanselige Virkeligheder,

Til at undersøge de guddommelige Mysterier.

GNISTEN OG DEN UFAERDIGE ASPIRANT

En lille Gnist kom fra Ilden,
Straks begyndte den at forhøre Ilden
Om dens Styrke, dens Særpræg, dens Natur,
Om det er muligt?

Nej, nej og atter nej.
Paa samme Maade med den ufærdige
Aspirant
Han begynder straks at eksaminere sin
Lærer,
At finde Fejl og at tillægge ham mange Fejl.
Han forfejler Maalet og falder i Afgrunden.

Sayings of Sivananda in Hungarian

UTMUTATO A YOGA TANULOK RESZERE

(Translated by Sri Sivananda-Lalita 'alias' Mrs. Margot Ariss)

1. Erd be a legszerenyeb szuksegietek-
kel.
2. Igazodj a korulmenyekhez.
3. Neragaszkodj senkihez es semmi-
hez.
4. Ozd meg masokkal amid van.
5. Legy szolgálat kessz.
6. Nefeled ell soha hogy csak eszko-
z vagy.
7. Beszelj halkan, es kellemes dolgo-
katt mondj.
8. Vagyad legyen egy hogy istent me-
gismerd.
9. Vezsd ala onmagad Isten akarata-
nak, es mondjal le minden tulajdon Jogrol.
10. Azert mert a spiritualis ut, egy
eles borotva pengén való seta a Guru felte-
tlen szukseges.
11. Legy turelmes es kitarto.
12. Soha meg egy napra sem hanya-
gold el az ismetelt spiritualis gyakorlato-
kat.
13. Menned az uton egyedul kell a
Guru csak vezett.
14. Rovid az élet nemtudod mikor
lepmeg a halál ezért komolyan gyakorold a
Yoga Sadhanat.
15. Naponta Vezess spiritualis naplot.
16. Sohase Panaszkodj hogy nines
idod spiritualis gyakorlatokra.
17. Gondolataidban osakis istennel
foglalkoz, vagy a valossággal tarzsd tavol a
világi gondolatokatt.
18. Feled el érzeseid es aszt hogy ki-
vagy, ferfi vagy no ereljesen oazspontosit-
zsd gondolataid Istenre.
19. Nehallassz el dolgokat holnapra ha
csak behetseges ted meg ma.
20. Nedicsekedj nemuto gazsd mittu-
dsz. Legy egyszeru es szereny.
21. Ad fel gondjaid, legy derus.
22. Neavatkoz a masok ugyebe.
23. Keruld a tarsasagot es vitat.
24. Naponta par orat maradj egyedul.
25. Szokj le irigysegrol kabzsisagrol
gyujtesrol.
26. Uralkodj erzeseiden heljes itelo
kepesseggel es lemondassall.
27. Gondolataid tarzsd allandoan eg-
gyensujban.
28. Gondold meg ketszer mielott bes-
zelsz, gondold meg haromszor mielott ose-
lekszel.
29. A bosszuallasrol a kritizalasrol es
a hibak Kereseserol szokjle, ovakodj az el-
lenhatastol.
30. Talald meg a saját hibaid es gy-
ongesegeid, Masokban csak a jot lazsd.
31. Bocsazsd meg es feleed ell ha ma-
sok megbantottak. Azoknak akik gyulol-
nek teged tegy jot.
32. Keruld el a szenvedelyt, haragot,
onzust, ragaszkodast, falanksagot, ezen
tulajdonsagoka lazsd mint Mindannyi mer-
ges kigyot.

Progress of Sivananda's Mission

—NOTABLE EVENTS AND FEATURES—

(September 16, 1959 to September 15, 1960)

SEPTEMBER : The Sivananda Assembly Hall and Press Building were declared open in Durban, South Africa, to serve the needs of the headquarters of the Divine Life Society Branches in that country.

OCTOBER 7 to 10 : The 41st All-India Yoga-Vedanta Conference was held. The 23rd and the 21st sessions of the All-World Religions Federation and the All-World Sadhus Federation, respectively, also met under the presidentship of Swami Sivananda.

OCTOBER 29 : Swami Chidananda was deputed to propagate the message of Yoga and Vedanta in America as a representative of Swami Sivananda.

NOVEMBER : A Sivananda Study Circle was opened at Milwaukee, USA.

NOVEMBER : The activities of the Sivananda Yoga-Vedanta Centres in America, conducted under the guidance of Swami Vishnudevananda, were consolidated, when their headquarters were formally constituted in Montreal, Canada.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER : Some of the important features of the activities of Sivanandashram were filmed and tape-recorded by *Television Francaise*, which were subsequently screened and televised in Western Europe, as a documentary feature on India. Sri Prem Nath, noted cinemactor-producer-director from Bombay, also filmed some similar sequences.

DECEMBER 12 : Swami Sivananda gave a reception to the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Sri V.V. Giri (who is at present the Governor of Kerala).

DECEMBER 25 : The Sivananda Art Group arranged an exhibition of various types of paintings and drawings, contributed by a number of artists.

DECEMBER 1959-JANUARY 1960 : At three Eye Relief Camps held in Saurashtra, under the medical charge of Dr. Sivananda Adhwaryoo, President of the Gujarat Divine Life Society, 786 operations were performed, and over 3,700 cases examined.

FEBRUARY : A Sivanandashram was opened at Epinay sur Orge, in France, by Swami Ananda (Paul Guerillot).

MARCH 10 : An idol of Sri Kartikeya was installed at the newly-constructed altar in the Ashram's Bhajan Hall.

MARCH 27 : A Sivananda Study Circle was opened in the Banaras Hindu University by Sri M.C. Bijawat, Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

APRIL 3 : The Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Divine Life Society were inaugurated by the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Sri V.V. Giri. Among those who attended the celebrations, were Sri K.C. Reddy, Union Minister for Works, Housing and Supply; Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia, Deputy Defence Minister; and Dr. Sir K.S. Krishnan, Director of the National Physical Laboratory in New Delhi.

APRIL 2, 4 and 5 : The 42nd All-India Yoga-Vedanta Conference was held. Major-General A.N. Sharma (retired) presided over the 24th Annual General Body Meeting of the Divine Life Society.

APRIL 12 : Swami Sivananda received the Governor of Punjab, Sri N.V. Gadgil.

MAY 1 : Sri Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Speaker of Lok Sabha, and Dr. B. Gopala Reddy, Union Minister of Revenue, addressed a Silver Jubilee meeting of the Divine Life Society at Sivanandanagar, and enunciated the vital aspects of religion and the role of the Society in the resuscitation of spiritual values.

JUNE : A Dental Camp was held at the Ashram, which treated about 300 cases.

JUNE : A Sivananda School of Yoga was opened in West Berlin.

JUNE-JULY : A Medical Relief Camp for women and children, conducted by Dr. Devaki Kutty at the Ashram, treated 235 cases.

JULY 3 : The 12th anniversary of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was celebrated. Over 650 students attended the Academy classes (for different durations) in its 12th year. The number of visiting-students from abroad were about 120, including those of Indian origin from Malaya, East Africa and South Africa.

AUGUST 31 : Swami Sivananda gave a reception to the newly-appointed Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao.

SEPTEMBER 1 : Governor Sri Prakasha of Maharashtra was received by Swami Sivananda.

SEPTEMBER 12 : Swamiji received the Queen Mothers of Nepal.

GIFT OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE

Over 90,000 copies of the various publications of Swami Sivananda, from large volumes to pocket-editions, in original English and vernacular translations, were distributed free of cost throughout the country and in many parts of the world, the price value and the distribution charges of

which amounted to Rs. 1,30,571.

GIFT OF AYURVEDIC MEDICINES

Medicines and tonics prepared at the Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Works were distributed, free of cost, to the value of Rs. 17,737, inclusive of distribution charges.

SIVANANDA GENERAL HOSPITAL

A total number of 26,601 cases were treated at the Sivananda General Hospital.

SIVANANDA EYE HOSPITAL

The Sivananda Eye Hospital treated a total number of 8,955 cases.

YOGA TRAINING

The Hatha Yoga Department of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy trained in the practice of Yoga exercises a total number of 616 students, of which 73 were from abroad. The Chief Instructor of the Department also visited the Roorkee Engineering University, Sohan Lal Training College at Ambala City, and Amar Bharati Institute at Dehra Dun, to give similar training to the interested students in those educational centres.

VISITING LECTURERS

Among those who were invited to address the students of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy were: Dr. Ian Kent, Montreal; Dr. Chou Hsiang-Kuang, Allahabad; the late Dr. Viswanathan, New Delhi; and Sri S. Subba Rao, Hyderabad.

VISITING STUDENTS FROM ABROAD

About 120 students from abroad, who stayed at the Ashram during the period under review (for different durations) attended the classes of the Y.-V.F. Academy, among whom were: Dr. Barbara Pleyer and Miss Helen Wolf, of West Germany; Sri R. Sew Pal, Sri R.V. Naidoo, Mrs. N.A. Lown, and Sri and Srimati M.S. Reddy, of South Africa; Miss Rita Ruprecht and Sri Alfredo Walkmeister, of Switzerland; Mrs. Inge-

borg Natz, and Mrs. Elfriede Roll, of West Berlin; Sri Rolando Rivera, of Gautimala; Sri Alfred Fleischer, of Canada; Sri Per Winther, of Sweden; Sri George Veaudry, of England; Sri Dale Egan, of Australia; Mrs. Margot Ariss, of Lebanon; and Mrs. Florence Anson, of Venezuela.

MESSAGES

Two messages every week, on the average, were sent by Swami Sivananda for different occasions to the various parts of the world.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PERIODICALS

About twenty periodicals, in English and other languages, besides those issued by the Divine Life Society and its Branches, continued to publish articles and serials by Swami Sivananda.

CORRESPONDENCE

Approximately 55 spiritual aspirants within India and about a dozen in other countries, received replies from Swami Sivananda to their letters every day.

SIVANANDA PUBLICATIONS

Under the auspices of the Divine Life Society and its allied institutions, 42 publications in English, by Swami Sivananda, and on his life and teachings, were published, among which were: *Religious Education*, *Sivananda Literature Vol. I*, *Yoga for Modern Man*, *In Hours of Communion*, *Practice of Brahmacharya*, *Dhyana Yoga*, and *Ten Upanishads*. (Some of these were reprint editions.)

INDIAN LANGUAGE EDITIONS

Swami Sivananda's works were translated and published in most of the regional languages of India, the total number of such publications being 49 in the period under review. The Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee brought out *Essence of Yoga* in most of the regional languages, besides *Moral and Spiritual Regeneration of the World* in Tamil, Telugu and Gujarati.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDITIONS

Nine of the works of Swami Sivananda were translated into French, German and Yugoslavic, among which were *Ligat-Power-Wisdom* in French, *What Becomes of the Soul After Death* in German, and *Essence of Yoga* in Yugoslavic. *Swara Yoga and Kriya Yoga*, translated into Indonesian last year, went into circulation in September, 1960.

INITIATIONS

Swami Sivananda initiated into the order of Sannyasa 13 renunciate disciples, and gave Mantra initiation to nearly 70 householder disciples.

TITLE AWARDS

Approximately 350 titles were awarded by Swami Sivananda, on behalf of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, to different individuals—to some in recognition of their talents in music, painting, dancing, etc., to some on having completed a course on Yoga exercises, and to some others for their devotion to God and Guru.

NEW DLS BRANCHES

Fortythree Branches of the Divine Life Society, including Sivananda Study Circles and Schools of Yoga, were opened outside India, i.e., in Malaya, Thailand, Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia, Kenya, South Africa, Switzerland, Germany, France, Canada and the USA, while 31 new Branches were opened in India.

REPRESENTATIVES OF H.Q.

Swami Chidananda, who is now in San Francisco, continued to spread the message of Yoga and Vedanta in Canada and in the USA, while Swami Vishnudevananda consolidated the activities of the Sivananda Yoga-Vedanta Centres in those countries by establishing the headquarters of the centres in Montreal. Swami Sambuddhananda reached West Berlin early in August,

to guide the training programme of the Sivananda School of Yoga in that city. Swami Bhumananda continued to visit different places in the State of Gujarat, to train interested individuals in the practice of Hatha Yoga exercises, mostly students in schools and colleges.

VISITING GROUPS OF STUDENTS

Swami Sivananda received 24 groups of students and teachers, and eight groups of tourists, to whom he imparted, as usual, ethical and spiritual instructions.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Six first floor rooms of *Mount Kailash Kutir*; a double-room apartment with a verandah in front, named *Ayodhya Kutir*; and the ground floor of *Saraswati Kutir*, consisting of two rooms and a verandah in front, were the main additions to the buildings at Sivanandanagar.

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES

Among those who gave special music and dance performances were: Sri Danda-

pani Desikar and Sri Dilip Kumar Roy (Karnatik and Hindustani, vocal), and Srimati Shankari Ganesh and Kumari Yamini Krishnamoorti (Bharatanatyam).

VISITORS

Among those who visited the Ashram during the period under review (besides those already mentioned in this feature) were: Sri D.P. Karmarkar, Union Minister of Health; Dr. S.P. Bolland, Ambassador of Mexico; Sri U.N. Dhebar, formerly President of the Indian National Congress; Sri T.L. Venkatarama Aiyar, Chairman, Law Commission; Sri Justice J.R. Mudholkar, Bombay High Court; Dr. C. Orloff, of the UNESCO; Sri P.S. Lokanathan, Director-General of the Council of Applied Economic Research; Giani Kartar Singh and Sri Jagat Narayan Lal, Ministers of Punjab and Bihar, respectively; Sri K.B. Lall, Additional Secretary to the Government of India; and Sri Shamsheer Singh, Inspector-General of Police, Punjab.

Ashram News and Notes

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

In a message sent on the occasion of the seventyfourth birthday of Sri Swami Sivanandaji, the Vice-President of India, Dr. Radhakrishnan, said that in these days of increasing secularization of life, it was good to draw the attention of the people that there was another dimension to human existence, and the works of Swami Sivananda contributed to the quickening of their spiritual life.

The birthday celebrations, which began at Sivanandanagar on the evening of September 6, was attended by a large number of disciples of Sri Swami Sivanandaji, assembled here from different parts of the country. The daily programme till the 10th, the last day of the 74th birthday celebration, consisted of common prayers and meditation in the early morning, immediately followed by a class on Yoga exercises and a discourse on spiritual topics, a similar discourse in the

afternoon, and a general Satsanga at night, which included music performances, Sankirtan and Bha-jan, besides short talks on the life and teachings of Swamiji.

Among the messages received from many persons, eminent and common, from various parts of the world, were those of Sri Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Speaker of Lok Sabha; Sri Gulzarilal Nanda, Union Minister of Labour, Employment and Planning; Sadhu T.L. Vaswani; Gen. Soekanto, of Indonesia; Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia, Deputy Defence Minister; and Sri S.V. Krishnamoorthy, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha.

In his birthday message Sri Swami Sivanandaji stressed on the need for a reassessment of moral, spiritual and material values, and observed that just as material interests must not run contrary to the moral well-being of man, so also religious values could not be opposed to his material

welfare. It was the ethical base that constituted the bedrock of spirituality and in its absence thrived the perversion of materialism, he remarked.

MAIN FEATURES

On the morning of September 8, a *homam* and a special worship was performed at the Viswanath Mandir for the health and longevity of Swami Sivanandaji, after which he gave *darshan* to the assembled disciples on the large terrace facing the Diamond Jubilee Office Hall. All the main functions were held in that place, where a *shami-ana* (canopy) had been erected. On September 7, 8 and 9, *pada puja* was offered to him in the forenoon. On the 8th morning, devotees filed passed, garlanding and prostrating in veneration before Gurudev.

The evening functions usually continued till midnight, when discourses appropriate to the occasion were given and Sankirtan and Bhajan sung. There were a number of music performances during all these functions and also on the afternoon on the 8th, among which were those by Sri Padmanabha Bhagavatar, of New Delhi, and Sri Sundaresan, of Tiruchi, who gave vocal recitals in the Karnatik style; Swami Vidyananda, Umashankarananda and Kalyani, who gave Veena recitals; and Swami Sadasivananda, Amarananda, Santananda and Ramprem, of Sivanandashram, Kumari Rajalakshmi and Srimati Sarada Raman, of Kerala, and Swami Amarananda, of Swargashram, who either gave vocal recitals of different *ragas* or sang popular *bhajans*.

After the *pada puja*, by mid-day, on September 8, Swami Sivanandaji gave Mantra initiation to some of the disciples. On the evening of the same day, a variety of fireworks display lent colour and jubilation to the occasion.

Among those who gave discourses on different occasions, during the birthday celebrations, were: Pandit Raghavacharya, a local scholar and educationist; Pandit Srinivasa Raghavachari, of Conjeevaram; Swami Jyotirmayananda, Vasantananda, Pranavananda, Lalitananda, Vedantananda, and Sri Atmaram Makhijani, of Sivanandashram;

Swami Nityananda, of Madras; Sri Vedanand Jha, of Bhagalpur; and Dr. Ramjas, of Rewari.

PRESENTATION OF BOOKS

A number of newly-printed books, in English and Indian languages, were presented to Swami Sivanandaji on the occasion of his birthday, among which were two new works, entitled *Religious Education* and *Sivananda Literature* (Vol. I), and the reprint editions of *Mind, Its Mysteries and Control*, *Dhyana Yoga*, *Integral Yoga*, *All About Sivananda*, *Advice to Women*, *Amrita Gita*, *Practice of Brahmacharya* and *How to Become Rich*.

In the language editions group were: *Sure Ways of Success in Life and God-realization*, in Bengali; *Lord Krishna, His Lilas and Teachings*, *Waves of Ganga* and *Sivananda Upadeshamritam*, in Hindi; *Essence of Yoga*, in Karnatik; a collection of stories and parables, in Punjabi; and *Amrita Gita*, *Ananda Gita* and *Philosophy of Dreams*, in Gujarati.

DISSEMINATION OF LITERATURE

At a meeting of the All-India Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee, held on September 9, in which representatives of many of the regional sub-committees participated, it was decided to bring out, within the next year, *Sure Ways of Success in Life and God-realization* in all the languages of the country, except in Bengali and Marathi, in which it has already been published.

The meeting also urged that the Branches of the Divine Life Society outside India should, in co-ordination with the SLDC, make a concerted effort to bring out such works of Swami Sivananda in as many European and Asian languages as possible, in all those countries where there are disciples of Gurudev.

For this purpose the meeting urged them to contact the President of the Committee, Swami Krishnananda, and make it feasible for him to redesignate the All-India Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee as the All-World SLDC. The Committee, within one year of its existence, has already brought out *Essence of Yoga* in most of the Indian languages, and *Moral and Spiritual*

Regeneration of the World, in Tamil, Telegu and Gujarati.

PARTICIPANTS

The concluding item of the birthday celebrations was an inspiring 'Divyanama Kirtanam' by a party of devotees from new Delhi, led by Sri A.V. Kuppuswamy, Under Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Among those participating in the birthday celebrations were: Dr. B.G. Adhwaryoo, Sri Chaturbhuj Shah, Sri Suryakant Shah and Sri Lakshmi Kant Dave, from Gujarat; Sri Bishenlal Kuthiala and Mrs. Chandravati Singh, from Dehra Dun; Sri Chellaram Tirthdas, from Quilemane, and Sri W.R. Sethi, from Mombasa, East Africa; Sri K. Santhanam and Sri R. Ramakrishna, from New Delhi; Sri Om Narayan, from Madras; Sri Rajani Mohan Chakravarti and Sri Neelakantan, from Calcutta; and Rani Nityakumari from Nepal.

OTHER ITEMS OF ASHRAM NEWS

Sri Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated at the Viswanath Mandir, on August 14, the main features of which were *laksharchana*, *mahabhisheka*, *homam*, Akhanda Kirtan of *Om Namoh Bhagavate Vasudevaya* Mantra, and Sankirtan and Bhajan.

Dr. Lakshmi pathy, a distinguished protagonist of rural health welfare and the Ayurvedic system of medicine, gave a lecture on August 24, and outlined the main features of his mission of raising the standard of public health, and medical self-sufficiency and sanitation in towns and villages, through individual and collective effort. At his instance, a health centre was formally opened at the Ashram and named by him as Sivananda Arogya Kendra.

A double statue of Lord Siva with that of Swami Sivananda, which Sri K.V. Subbarao Chowdhry, of Undrajavaram, Andhra Pradesh, had specially made for installation in a temple built by him in his village, was unveiled at the Ashram on August 4, and was on view till the birthday of Swamiji.

Earlier, from July 24 to 30, the 462nd birth anniversary of Saint Tulsidas was observed here,

with daily *katha*, by Swami Narayananda, on the *Ramacharitamānas*, the outstanding work on the *Ramayana* by the saint. An interesting feature was the commencement of a daily class on the *Ramacharitamānas* for the students of the Sivananda Upper Primary School. There were also discourses appropriate to the occasion, music performances, and daily recitations from the *Ramayana*.

VIPs AT THE ASHRAM

There was a spate of VIPs at the Ashram during the period under review. On the evening of August 31, Swami Sivanandaji gave a dinner in honour of the new Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, who visited the Ashram for the first time.

Next morning Swamiji received the governor of Maharashtra, Mr. Sri Prakasha. Incidentally, the Governor's father, the late Dr. Bhagavan Das, was one of the foremost scholars of modern India, and was a great educationist and saintly leader.

On September 12, Swamiji received the senior Queen Mother of Nepal, Her Majesty K.R.L. Devi Shah; the junior Queen Mother, Her Majesty E.R. L. Devi Shah; H.R.H. Prince Basundhara, the brother of the King of Nepal; and their Royal Highness Princess T.R.L. Devi Shah and Princess V.R.L. Devi Shah, the sisters of the King. The distinguished visitors were accompanied by a few other members of the Nepalese Royal family, and attended by Brig.-Gen. Tirth Bikram Rana, and Sri B.R. Bhandari, First Secretary of the Royal Nepalese Embassy in New Delhi.

Among others who visited the Ashram were: Dr. Sri Ranjan, Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University; His Holiness Prabhudatt Brahmachari; Sri Bindeshwari Prasad Verma, Speaker of the Bihar State Assembly; Sri G.C. Sharma, of Nairobi; Prof. Godha, of Singapore University; Sri Sabhnani, of Colombo; and Sri Batra, from Montreal.

Rani Nityakumari, of Nepal, and her daughter, Rajyalakshmi, and son-in-law, Rajkumar Tejen-

dra Pratap, are now staying at the Ashram.

Sri P.H. Veaudry, of England, and Sri A. Carusi, of Italy, have joined the group of visiting

Sadhaks now residing here.

A batch of 21 cadets of the Indian Military Academy was received by Swamiji, on August 14.

Divine Life Activities at Outstations

CHIDANANDA IN SAN FRANCISCO

On having concluded a four-month programme of spreading the knowledge of Yoga and Vedanta in Vancouver, in Western Canada, where he gave a series of lectures, held at different centres, and conducted study and meditation classes at Sivanandashram, in the suburb of South Burnaby, Swami Chidananda paid a flying visit to West Germany and India on a private mission, in the third and fourth weeks of August, and arrived in Los Angeles towards the end of the same month.

He gave a series of ten lectures on the principles of Yoga and spiritual values of life, under the auspices of the East-West Cultural Centre, at Hollywood, before leaving for Vancouver, in the first week of September. He is scheduled to take up a term as a visiting lecturer at the American Academy of Asian Studies in San Francisco, by now. He is expected to stay there till the end of November.

VISHNUDEVANANDA IN MONTREAL

Swami Vishnudevananda, having held two summer camps in the Laurentians, near St. Hippolyte, in the Province of Quebec, is now back at the Sivananda Yoga-Vedanta Centre, in Montreal, and has resumed his training programme of Yoga exercises. The Centre, which was till now functioning in a rented apartment, has acquired a building of its own, and proposes to start a periodical on the different theoretical and practical aspects of Yoga.

SAMBUDDHANANDA IN BERLIN

A monastic disciple of Gurudev Sivananda, Swami Sambuddhananda reached West Berlin on August 4, and has taken over the training programme of Yoga exercises at the Sivananda School of Yoga, which was earlier founded there at Eisenacherstrasse by Swami Ompranananda (Mrs.

Herta Koinzer), another disciple of Gurudev, who stayed at Sivanandanagar for three months, early this year.

YOGA COURSE IN TROGEN

The European Divine Life Society at Trogen, Switzerland, held a course on Yoga practices during the month of August. There were three daily classes on Hatha Yoga, at 5 a.m., 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., conducted by Sri Jean Pitton and Mrs. Jeanotat. The early morning class began with Kirtan and devotional music. Besides meditation classes, there were five lectures every day, dealing on the different aspects of Yoga, on Swami Sivananda and his teachings, and on the activities of the European Divine Life Society, and at the world headquarters at Sivanandanagar.

Sri Sivananda Margarita held half a dozen classes, which included common meditation, Kirtan and playing of gramophone records of Swami Sivananda and his tape-recorded messages. Sri Theo Schneider, who gave two lectures on his visit to Sivanandanagar, organized the Yoga Course, efficiently and devotedly. A number of students from different places attended the Yoga Course.

Two new Branches of the Divine Life Society were opened through the efforts of the EDLS, one at Sion by Mrs. Jeanotat, and the other at Algiers by the head of the local University.

VENKATESANANDA IN MYSORE

From August 21 to September 3, a series of lectures on the *Bhagavadgita* were given by Swami Venkatesananda, one of the distinguished monastic disciples of Gurudev Sivananda, at the Government Sanskrit College Hall, in Mysore. The lectures were given, under the auspices of the Mysore Branch of the Divine Life Society, from 6.30 to 8.00 every evening, and were always pre-

ceded by playing of Swami Sivananda's tape-recorded songs.

A large number of persons attended the lectures on all days, and had also the opportunity of hearing from Swami Venkatesananda many of the inspiring and interesting anecdotes from the life of Gurudev, with whom the great disciple was intimately connected during the past fifteen years. Copies of *Gita for Students*, by Swami Venkatesananda, were distributed among the audience.

During his stay at Mysore, he also took part in the Sunday Satsangas held at the house of Sardar Gopalraj Urs, when Swami Sivananda's tape-recorded songs were played and discourses on his teachings given by Swami Venkatesananda, besides recitals on the Veena by Sri V. Doreswamy Iyengar.

At 8.45 p.m., on September 18, the Hyderabad station of the All-India Radio was to have broadcast a talk by Swami Venkatesananda on the "Philosophy of Swami Sivananda."

Latest Publications in Different Languages

The following are the latest Sivananda publications, besides those mentioned elsewhere in this issue, released during August-September:

DHYANA YOGA (*English*, second edition) is a very useful work on the practice of meditation. (Rs. 3)

SURE WAYS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE AND GOD-REALIZATION has been translated into *Bengali*, by Sri Rajani Mohan Chakravarti, and published through the South Calcutta Branch of the Divine Life Society, 28-A, Sardar Sankar Road, Calcutta 29. (Rs. 2)

WAVES OF GANGA, which deals on basic spiritual subjects, has been translated into *Hindi*, by Swami Jyotirmayananda. (Rs. 3)

LORD KRISHNA, HIS LILAS AND TEACHINGS has been translated into *Hindi*, by Srimati Chandravati Singh, and published at Sivanandanagar. (Rs. 4)

ESSENCE OF YOGA has been translated into *Karnatik*, by Swami Sankarananda, and published through the Karnatik Sub-Committee of the All-India Sivananda Literature Dissemination Committee, 131 Chick Bazar Road, Tasker Town, Bangalore. (Re. 1)

AMRITA GITA: The second edition of the *Gujarati* translation has been brought out by the Gujarat Divine Life Society, Virnagar, via Atkot, Dist. Rajkot, Saurashtra. (50 nP.)

PHILOSOPHY OF DREAMS has been trans-

lated into *Gujarati*, by Sri Vishnudev S. Pandit, and published through the Gujarat Sub-Committee of the SLDC, 894 Tokarshah's Pole, Jamalpur, Ahmedabad. (Re. 1.25)

SAINT ALAVANDAR has been translated into *Tamil* by Sri K. Vanamamala, and published at Sivanandanagar. (50 nP.)

ANANDA GITANJAL is a book of verses in *Malayalam*, by Swami Ramananda, on the life and teachings of Swami Sivananda, published through the Kerala Sub-Committee of the SLDC. (75 nP.)

SUCHE MOTI is a collection of Swami Sivananda's spiritual stories, parables and sayings, in *Gurmukhi*, published through the Punjab Sub-Committee of the SLDC. Translators: Sri Jitendranath Khullar and Sri Darbar Singh Pritam. (Available from Sri Jitendranath Khullar, M.A., P.O. Bhogpur, Dist. Jullundhur, at 0.75 nP per copy.)

SIVANANDA UPADESHAMRITAM is a collection of sayings, translated into *Hindi*, by Swami Jyotirmayananda, and published through the Dehra Dun DLS Branch. (Re. 1)

INDONESIAN EDITION

Swami Sivananda's **SWARA YOGA AND KRIYA YOGA**, which was translated into Indonesian more than a year ago, by the late Sri Kwee Liong Tian, a noble disciple of Swami Sivananda, has been published by the Surabaya Branch of the Divine Life Society.

Sivananda Publication League, P.O. Sivanandanagar, (via Rishikesh), U.P.

FORTYTHIRD ALL-INDIA YOGA-VEDANTA CONFERENCE

As already announced in the previous issue, the 43rd All-India Yoga-Vedanta Conference, also known as the Divine Life Sadhana Weekend, will be held at Sivanandanagar during the last four days of the Navaratri Puja, from September 26 to 29, which will, in addition, include the convening of the 24th session of the All-World Religions Federation and the 22nd session of the All-World Sadhus Federation. All the functions will be conducted under the overall guidance of Sri Swami Sivanandaji. All are welcome to participate in the programme given below, after having informed the Secretary of the Divine Life Society. Voluntary contributions for the occasion will be thankfully accepted by the Ashram.

COMMON FEATURES

4.30 a.m. to 5.30 a.m.	Common prayers, Japa and meditation.
5.30 a.m. to 6.30 a.m.	Asana class.
9.00 a.m. to 10.30 a.m.	Devi Puja in the Bhajan Hall.
7.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m.	Satsanga: Discourses on general spiritual topics, special music performances, Sankirtan, Bhajan, and concluding worship

SEPTEMBER 26, MONDAY

9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.	Discourses on the Yoga of Synthesis as enunciated in the <i>Bhagavadgita</i> .
3.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Mantra-writing.
4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.	Discourses on the ideals of spiritual life and the general aspects of Yogic discipline.

SEPTEMBER 27, TUESDAY

9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.	Discourses on the different modes of Bhakti Yoga and experiences in the Path of Devotion.
3.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Mantra-writing.
4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.	22nd session of the All-World Sadhus Federation, and discourses on the Path of Selfless Service.

SEPTEMBER 28, WEDNESDAY

9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.	Discourses on the Eight Steps in Raja Yoga, and control of mind and occult experiences.
3.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Mantra-writing competition.
4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.	24th session of the All-World Religions Federation, and discourses on the fundamentals of major religious beliefs and the place of religion in the present day.

SEPTEMBER 29, THURSDAY

9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.	Saraswati Puja, music performances, Sankirtan, Bhajan and initiations by Swami Sivananda.
3.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Explanation of the Yoga Museum.
4.15 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.	Discourses on the Vedanta philosophy and the Four Means of Sadhana.

